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Maine's monthly newspaper for lesbians & gay men

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 3
APRIL 1994

EXPANDED
16-PAGE
EDITION!

Christian Coalition plans Bangor training

by Terri Jones
Editor

PORTLAND—The Christian Coalition canceled a scheduled "Leadership Training School" slated for Portland on March 4 and 5 due to low enrollment. According to Mrs. Paul Volle, local contact for seminar registration, the training was canceled because the Coalition was too busy fighting the Outcomes 2000 legislation (known as HR 6) and because the Coalition had not signed up the 20 people necessary to hold the training. The Coalition is still planning a "Leadership Training School" for Bangor on May 6 and 7.

Nationally, the Christian Coalition has sponsored trainings to teach fundamen-

talists how to "influence public policy" as well as targeting school curricula and school board elections. The effort has generated enough success that national groups like the People for the American Way, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Fight the Right Project and the National Center for Science Education are monitoring their activities. Of particular concern, according to these groups, is the Coalition's consistent tactic of obscuring their candidates' affiliations during the campaign.

Christian Coalition president Pat Robertson wants the Coalition to put the country back in the hands of "those who share [a] pro-family, reli-

continued on page 2

Concert picket fizzles

by Rebecca Foster
Editor

FARMINGTON—The March 20th Farmington performance by the Maine Gay Men's Chorus was picketed by eight anti-gay protesters carrying signs proclaiming "homosexuality is a sin" and handing out leaflets criticizing the "homosexual lifestyle". The protest comes on the heels of a series of threatening letters sent to the campus' lesbian and gay student group Gay and Straight People's Educational Alliance (GASPE Alliance).

Members of the Chorus were expecting the picketers and extra campus security was provided. Audience members responded to the protest by

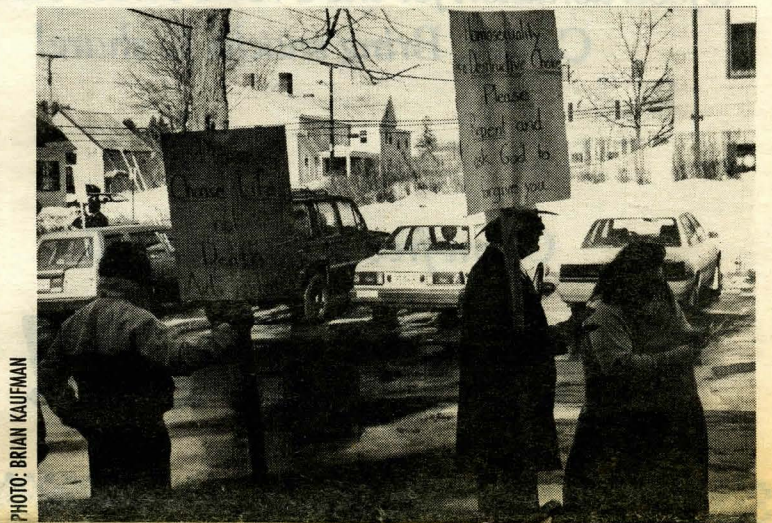


PHOTO: BRIAN KAUFMAN

Three of eight picketers at Farmington concert.

tearing the free literature in half and placing in trash cans outside the auditorium.

The Chorus' appearance was part of UMaine

Farmington's Gay Pride Week which also featured a panel discussion and an appearance by gay folk singer Martin Swinger.

'Spring for Life' AIDS Art Auction



PHOTO: REBECCA FOSTER

Auctioneers Rob and Annette Elowitch of Barridoff Galleries were on hand for the "Spring for Life" AIDS Art Auction, held March 19 at Portland's State Theatre. Over 200 works by Maine artists were donated, raising a record total of over \$68,000, surpassing the previous year's amount by more than \$7,000. The auction, to benefit The AIDS Project, attracted 650-700 people.

Gay G-man, FBI settle discrimination suit

by Tyler White
Editor

WASHINGTON—In a mid-trial settlement, the FBI has agreed to end discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. FBI Agent Frank Buttino filed suit against the FBI when he was fired by the agency after 20 years of exemplary service. The resolution of the case came after the Clinton Administration promised equal treatment for gay and heterosexual FBI agents and applicants. Just a week prior to the settlement, Attorney General Janet Reno barred all Justice Department agencies from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation.

Buttino first came under agency scrutiny in 1988 when his supervisors received an anonymous note claiming that Buttino was gay. The note included a reply by Buttino to a personal advertisement from a gay newspaper. Initially, Buttino denied the story, but after a period of time admitted that he

See National News on page 5 for more news on federal government.

had written the reply. The FBI fired Buttino for lying and for failing to cooperate with the investigation of the note. The author of the note was never identified.

The settlement of this case has forced the FBI to reconsider a hiring decision. Dana Tillson, who applied for an FBI job in 1987, received high marks in the hiring process until the FBI learned that she was a lesbian, something she did not hide. Based on the settlement with Buttino, the FBI has agreed to reconsider Tillson's application.

Along with the new policy, the FBI has agreed to pay Buttino approximately \$100,000, \$53,000 in legal fees and a monthly pension when he turns 62. Buttino dropped his request for reinstatement and plans to teach near his home in upstate New York.

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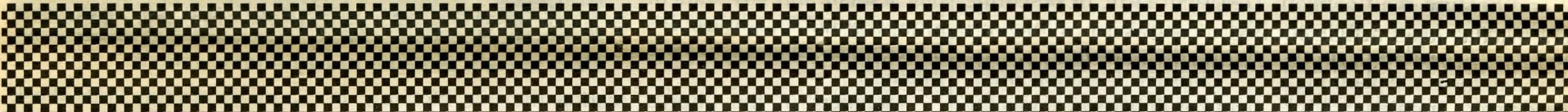
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Editorial & Comment

Adam & Eve or the Big Bang?

State referendums are not the only means conservative Christians are using to spread their narrow-minded views throughout the country. Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition has set their eyes on the schools of America as another outlet for intolerance.

While the national media frequently probes the pasts and affiliations of national candidates, our local school boards and municipal governing bodies have no such ally. Candidates, often unopposed, can easily win seats without significant scrutiny of their pasts, affiliations or agendas. When this is coupled with the relatively small amounts of money needed to conduct a campaign for school board, the situation is ripe for infiltration. The Christian Coalition is funding candidates for these races.

This possibility was explored by a recent *Mother Jones* article. In it, recently-arrived city-dwellers discovered that their new hometown has a school board dominated by members of a local fundamentalist church. Soon, schoolchildren are learning "creationism" as the newest scientific thought. In another recent news feature, *60 Minutes* explored a "reality-based" sex education course that teaches abstinence only, with commentary that suggests that AIDS and other STDs are "nature's comment" on the appropriateness of homosexual sex and sex outside of marriage. A similar curriculum is nearing passage in San Diego.

No state or area of the country is safe from this type of activity. The *Mother Jones* article looked at a town outside of Seattle, the *60 Minutes* article looked at a southern town, the Christian Coalition is running 88 candidates in New York state school board elections and has arrived in Maine and is training people to "influence public policy".

This means that Maine citizens—gay and straight—who are interested in preserving tolerance must add one more task to their list. We must watch school board elections carefully, question the candidates that come knocking on our doors and publicize what we learn by writing letters to the editor supporting non-fundamentalist candidates.

It may be that there are some politicians in power whose minds will never support tolerance, community or human rights. It may also be the case that we will not have a gay rights bill in Maine for five more years. These are separate fights that we must do. What we cannot allow is the infection of the minds of the next generation of Maine citizens by letting groups like the Christian Coalition determine school curriculum.

These groups have targeted the next generation of voters, politicians, policy-makers and citizens and they want to teach them to hate and to fear those that do not support or represent their beliefs. Not only is that un-American, it's anti-democratic and ugly. Even if we cannot win all our battles this year, do not allow the Christian Coalition and others like them to win the easy fight. The cost to young Maine minds is too high.

Dykes To Watch Out For



Dykes To Watch Out For



10%

Maine's monthly newspaper for lesbians & gay men

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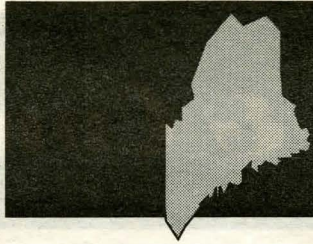
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Maine News

continued from page 1

Christian Coalition plans Bangor training

gious, traditional-values perspective." Thus far, the Coalition has had significant success according to reports by the People for the American Way and *Mother Jones* magazine and are continuing to work towards their goal of "Christianizing" the schools.

A recent *Mother Jones* article notes that one-third of the Coalition's candidates for school board seats were successful last year. Once elected, they have been instrumental in the revision of school curricula, particularly, sex education courses. The most significant success to date is their elimination (with help from the New York City Archdiocese) of a multicultural elementary school program for New York City children. During the last New York City school board elections, the Coalition fielded 288 candidates for seats on 32 boards and claimed victory after 66 of their candidates won.

The Coalition has used several tactics to win support for the revision of school curricula. In particular, they have stressed that programs that teach diversity and tolerance teach children to be homosexual in an effort to capitalize on a community's homophobia. They also stress a return to the basic education, reading, writing and arithmetic, an appealing but misleading message to parents. The Goals 2000 legislation and outcomes-based education is a major annoyance to the Christian Coalition. The legislation, currently before Congress, is designed to focus students on specific learning goals.

According to Mrs. Volle, outcomes-based education is an attempt to "federalize education" removing from local and parents' control and is part of "creeping socialism". When asked what concerned individuals could do about this threat, she suggested calling Congressional representatives to oppose the measure.

For information about the Bangor seminar, contact the national Christian Coalition office at (800) 325-4746 or local contacts at (207) 774-7778.

UMF students rally against hate letters

FARMINGTON—On March 4th, over 200 students and faculty gathered at a campus rally to show solidarity in the face of a series of homophobic and threatening letters mailed to the University of Maine at Farmington's Gay and Straight People's Educational Alliance (GASPE Alliance). Speakers at the rally included representatives from the Maine Civil Liberties Union, gubernatorial candidate Jonathan Carter's wife and UMF's Interim President Sue Huseman. The rally was organized to provide a opportunity for the campus to show support for GASPE and for diversity.

Washington Blade senior editor keynotes

BRUNSWICK—Lisa Keen, senior editor of *The Washington Blade*, gave the keynote address at the Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance Annual Awards Banquet held on March 5 in Brunswick. A member of a handful of veteran lesbian and gay journalists in the country, Keen has specialized in following court battles for lesbian and gay rights and tracking the efforts of right-wing groups.

Keen warned the audience that the national lesbian and gay movement "is in trouble" and is facing as many anti-gay efforts as pro-gay initiatives. She noted that of the 19 anti-gay initiatives in 1993, all were successful, including Lewiston's repeal of a city nondiscrimination ordinance. This contrasts sharply with 1992 when the movement won three initiatives and lost three others.

The tactics of right-wing groups usually fall into three categories according to Keen. The first relies on a Biblical interpretation that maintains that the Bible denounces homosexuals and that laws should be changed to reflect Biblical pronouncements. The second tactic characterizes lesbians and gay men as child molesters and disease-ridden and therefore, unworthy of civil rights protection. (Some anti-gay initiatives have been misleadingly titled "child protection acts" in an effort to convey this notion) Finally, anti-gay organizers attempt to characterize civil rights legislation as conferring "special rights" on lesbians and gay men.

The movement for gay rights should take note, in Keen's opinion that these arguments can be countered by noting statistical and Biblical studies that contradict right-wing views of gay rights issues.

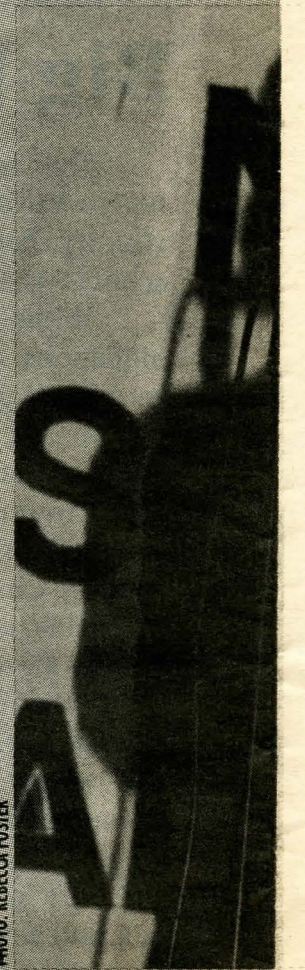


PHOTO: REBECCA FOSTER

GASPE received three pieces of hate-mail containing explicit threats to gay students and staff members. The first piece called itself a "letter on your [GASPE] behalf" and was "a fair warning of the future for your sick alliance". The letter went on to state that "[t]he writer] have recently had a bad encounter with a lesbian or dyke or whatever you what to call the person (it). On behalf of this sick individual (the dyke), she has thus ruined all of my support for the (sic) homosexual rights."

Vowing to punish "[t]his lesbian for her lesbian ways", the letter ended by characterizing GASPE as organization for "self gain and bigotry for your own sexual preference." The letter was signed "a new anti-gay person with firearms and other neat weapons, like strong hands, knives, etc. (you get the point) ha ha ha ha ha."

The second letter, while not overtly threatening, questioned whether homosexuality is natural and asserted the writer's opinion that "homosexuality is not normal, it will never be normal and it will never be considered normal in our society." The letter was signed "a true Heterosexual!!!!!"

Rally organization began after a third letter threatened to "put a damper on you (sic) lifestyle. My goal is to make you afraid of coming out of the closet (where you belong)." The letter also mentioned resident life staff member Tony Victor, saying "Imlaybe Tony can be the one to take the punishment for the rest of you sick people." Victor is head of diversity programming at UMF and is co-advisor to GASPE.

Students and other participants

in the rally voiced support for the student organization and dismay and shock over the violent tone of the letters.

Two burglaries devastate new bar

PORTLAND—Sisters, Portland's newest lesbian-owned bar, was burglarized on two separate occasions during the weekend of March 25th. The bar's CD collection as well as bottles of liquor were stolen sometime after closing on both Friday and Saturday night.

Mary Ann Brown, one of the bar's owners, expressed sadness and a feeling of violation after the incidents. She feels grateful for the show of support by area business Sister Creations, which sponsored a raffle to help defray the cost of new CDs, and an outpouring of support and donations by customers, who have stopped by the Danforth St. bar to express their concern.

The Portland Police Department is investigating the crimes and have stepped up patrols in the area to prevent further problems.

Sisters plans a benefit to raise funds to replace the lost items.

MLGPA hosts pols at annual banquet

BRUNSWICK—The March 5 Maine Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance Annual Awards Banquet featured an unprecedented number of politicians and candidates. In all, some 36 candidates and current office holders appeared pledging support for a gay rights bill for Maine. Gubernatorial



National News



s ML/GPA banquet



candidates Tom Allen, Jonathan Carter, Richard Barringer, Joseph Brennan, Angus King, Donnell Carroll, James Howaniec and Robert Woodbury and a representative for Sumner Lipman all pledged support for a gay rights bill.

In addition to gubernatorial candidates, other candidates included Jean Hay, Chip Spencer, David Schief, Paula Craighead, Anne Rand, Sharon Treat, Eliza Townsend, David Costello, Dale McCormack and Susan Farnsworth.

Bangor pride group organizes march, Stonewall 25 trip

BANGOR—Freedom Fest Maine is planning Bangor's second pride march and festival for Saturday, July 9. The march will begin at 12 noon in downtown Bangor and end with an all day festival at Paul Bunyon Park.

The organizers are looking for parade marshals, medically trained personnel, volunteers for set-up, entertainers, vendors, information booths, craftspeople, farmers, donations and businesses. Freedom Fest will also be organizing a round trip bus to the Stonewall 25 International March on the United Nations. The bus will leave Bangor on June 25 and returns June 27. The ticket price is \$45 and deposits are required by May 15.

Interested individuals can attend march planning meetings the first Sunday of the month at the Peace and Justice Center, 359 Main St., Bangor at 2pm. For bus registration and more information, please contact Malcolm Smith at 866-4320 or at P.O. Box 624, Orono, ME 04473.

Justice Department settles first AIDS discrimination case under the ADA

PHILADELPHIA—The Justice Department has settled a suit filed against the city of Philadelphia and its Emergency Medical Services personnel under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The complaint was filed by a man who was refused emergency medical assistance after he told an emergency medical technician (EMT) that he was taking AZT.

The complaint, filed by the AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania, alleged that a man who was lying on the ground and experiencing chest pains was asked by an EMT if he was taking medication. When the man whispered that he was on AZT, the EMT backed away and refused to give assistance. The complaint further alleged that the EMTs told the man to place himself on the stretcher. When he was unable to do so, a bystander assisted him.

Under the terms of the settlement, Philadelphia has agreed to develop an AIDS awareness program and will train the city's firefighters and EMTs. The training will include transmission prevention, respect for right to privacy and sensitivity to the needs of people with HIV. In addition, the city will write and publicize a policy that prohibits EMTs from discriminating against individuals with HIV/AIDS and discipline any employee who fails to comply with the city's nondiscrimination guidelines. Philadelphia will pay the man \$10,000 in compensatory damages and make a formal, written apology.

The suit was brought under Title II of the ADA which prohibits state and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability in the delivery of their programs and services.

Reno issues waiver allowing HIV+ visitors to attend Gay Games

WASHINGTON—Attorney General Janet Reno has approved a waiver that will allow people with HIV to enter the United States to attend the Gay Games scheduled for June 18-25 in New York City. The waiver will grant stays of 10 days, allowing visitors to attend the 8-day event with 2 additional days for travel. Individuals seeking visas will not be asked to state their HIV status, but must show their intent, through tickets or other proof, to visit the Games, according to Justice Department spokespeople. The move was endorsed by the State Department and the Department of Health and Human Services.

The action was taken after the Centers for Disease Control found no public health reason to prohibit brief stays. The waiver option was raised by Assistant Secretary of Health Dr.

Philip Lee, who characterized denial of entry as "directly contrary to the public health policies of supporting people with disabilities in our society."

President Clinton has promised to remove the ban on visas for people with HIV but has been unable to get his proposal through Congress.

Florida Supreme Court strikes down anti-gay amendment

TALLAHASSEE—The Florida State Supreme Court has blocked a proposed November 1993 anti-gay ballot initiative saying that it violates the state's constitution. The initiative, sponsored by the American Family Association, would have banned new laws and repeal all old ones that grant protection on the basis any "characteristic, trait, status or condition other than race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, ethnic background marital status or familial status."

Suzanne Goldberg, who argued against the proposal for the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund characterized the proposal as so broadly written that it could have eliminated legal protection for many other groups. She said the court's ruling "makes clear that civil rights are not special rights, and it deals a powerful blow to the national radical right's attack on lesbians and gay men and civil rights generally."

Ralph Stores associate director of the American Family Association in Miami has had no comment on the ruling except "Watch out."

Mexican granted asylum to escape persecution of gays

WASHINGTON—The Immigration and Naturalization Service has granted asylum to a gay man from Mexico based on his "well-founded fear of persecution". A man using the pseudonym, Jose Garcia, sought asylum after living in the U.S. illegally for 10 years. He cited beatings, harassment and rape by Mexican authorities who knew of his sexual orientation. He also stated that his work in the U.S. as a gay advocate and AIDS outreach worker would make him a target.

Garcia's attorney, Ron Silberstein was thankful to the Clinton Administration for the decision but said he was not aware of any special consideration or effort on the part of the Administration to resolve the case.

The ruling, while not allowing all gays automatic asylum, may set the stage for other grants for individuals from other countries.

Maryland suit alleges forcible HIV testing

BALTIMORE—A man has filed suit in Federal District Court accusing Maryland officials of violating his civil

rights when he was allegedly dragged from his car and forcibly tested for HIV. The man, who is unidentified in the lawsuit, has accused 5 Maryland officials of violating his right to privacy and protection from illegal searches and seizures.

According to documents filed with the suit, Maryland officials had contacted the man several times over a two-month period to notify him of his exposure to an infectious disease and of his need to be tested. After failing to respond to these efforts, a warrant was issued for his arrest.

In August of 1992, the man was pulled over, arrested and taken to the county jail for testing. At the end of August, he was told that he had tested positive for the HIV virus.

The plaintiff's lawyer, Nancy Paige, has said that Maryland law calls for voluntary testing with counseling which was not provided to the plaintiff. Current Maryland makes it a crime to knowingly spread potentially fatal diseases. This defense however, is not available to the state, according to Paige, because the officials were not sure that her client was infected at the time he was stopped.

Idaho polls show support for gay rights

BOISE—In a survey of 810 Idahoans, a 2-1 margin opposed a Idaho Citizens Alliance proposal to restrict "special rights" for homosexuals. The measure is scheduled for a November 1994 vote.

Significant numbers of those polled were undecided including nearly one third from Northern Idaho and 20% overall. The measure's supporters downplayed the results of the poll because the question used the neutral term "policies regarding homosexuality" instead of the reference "anti-gay". A poll commissioned by the Idaho Citizens Alliance had announced that 68% of those surveyed supported the measure.

SUNY officials decline to appeal recruiting bar

ALBANY—The State University of New York system has decided not to appeal a ruling which prohibits military recruiters from operating on its campuses because of Pentagon discrimination against lesbians and gay men. Ex-SUNY Chancellor D. Bruce Johnstone notified campus presidents about the decision in late February.

In November 1993, a state judge ordered SUNY Buffalo to bar visits by military recruiters in a suit brought by law student and lesbian, Terry Mayo. Mayo asserted that the recruiters should not be allowed on campus because they would not allow her to enlist because of her sexual orientation.

Although the decision prohibits recruiters, it does not impact military scholarships, ROTC activities or re-

continued on page 6

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and a lot of other places, too!



continued from page 1

search grants.

The SUNY system has more than 400,000 students and is the largest state university system in the nation.

Gay candidate wins. Chicago primary

CHICAGO—Tom Chiola won an overwhelming victory over four candidates in the March 15 Democratic primary for the Cook County Circuit Court. Despite a field of five candidates, Chiola won 35% of the vote raising hopes that he will be successful in the November 8 general election.

Chiola has served as Chief Administrative Law Judge for the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation for five years. If elected, he would join Pulaski School Board member Mark Loveless as Illinois' second openly gay elected official.

Stonewall route, rally still elusive

NEW YORK—Organizers of the June 26 march commemorating the Stonewall riots have expressed frustration over New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's proposal to reroute the march. Stonewall 25 has requested three different parade routes but the Mayor's Office has countered with a proposal to route the parade down FDR Drive to Battery Park. Organizers had requested routes leading to Central Park's Great Lawn.

One group characterized the effort as "keep[ing] a fringe group on the fringe of the city." Organizers have expressed concern that the Mayor is attempting to keep the demonstration out of sight. Spokespeople for the Mayor's Office say that an impasse exists and that the Mayor's Office "doesn't want to budge."

New definition and heterosexuals fuel surge in AIDS cases

ATLANTA—New AIDS cases more than doubled last year to 103,500, according to the Centers for Disease Control. The Centers had projected a increase of 75% due to a new definition of AIDS which includes those infected with HIV who have a severely suppressed immune system, tuberculosis, recurrent pneumonia or invasive cervical cancer.

Patricia Fleming, chief of reporting and analysis for the CDC, said that the numbers show that the virus is transcending previous risk groups and moving into the heterosexual community. The largest increases took place among teen-agers and young adults aged 20 to 24.

The numbers still gay men as the largest group of those with the disease but cases resulting from heterosexual contact jumped 130% over

1992 with women accounting for two-thirds of the heterosexual cases.

New magazine features Goldwater's grandson

NEW YORK—POZ, a new magazine for people who are HIV-positive features an interview and nude photograph's of 31-year old Ty Ross, grandson of famous conservative Barry Goldwater. The bimonthly lifestyle magazine was published on March 15 and features the first public acknowledgment by Ross of his HIV status.

The premiere issue also has an interview with Bob Hattoy, the only openly HIV-positive appointee in the Clinton Administration. Subscription information for the magazine is available from POZ Magazine, Old Chelsea Station, P.O. Box 1279, New York, NY 10113-1279, telephone (212) 242-2163. POZ is free to those who identify themselves as HIV-positive.

NY gay rights bill faces uphill battle in senate

ALBANY—Following last year's Senate non-action that allowed an Assembly-passed gay rights bill to die without a Senate vote, the New York State Assembly has passed a gay rights bill, 88 to 56. The legislation would make sexual orientation a protected class under the state's civil rights law.

The same measure passed the Assembly last year but was allowed to die when Senate Republicans refused to let it on the floor for a vote. Privately, the Republican senators stated that they did not want to take a public position on the bill and feared a backlash from the Conservative Party and the New York State Catholic Conference, two groups that opposed the measure.

Despite pressure from Governor Mario Cuomo, Senate Republicans seem likely to follow last year's course. Gay organizers have said that they will organize letter-writing campaigns and personal visits in an effort to "put a human face" on the issue.

Anti-gay initiatives pass in Oregon towns, county

OREGON—Three Oregon towns and one county have passed anti-gay ordinances despite a state law that prohibits such measures. Marion County, and the towns of Turner, Albany and Junction City each passed ordinances that bar lesbians and gay men from being guaranteed the same protections as racial minorities and prohibit public spending on programs that "promote" the gay lifestyle.

The ordinances were backed by the Oregon Citizens Alliance, the group that sponsored the failed Measure 9, a statewide anti-gay ballot initiative that was defeated in 1992.

Happenings...

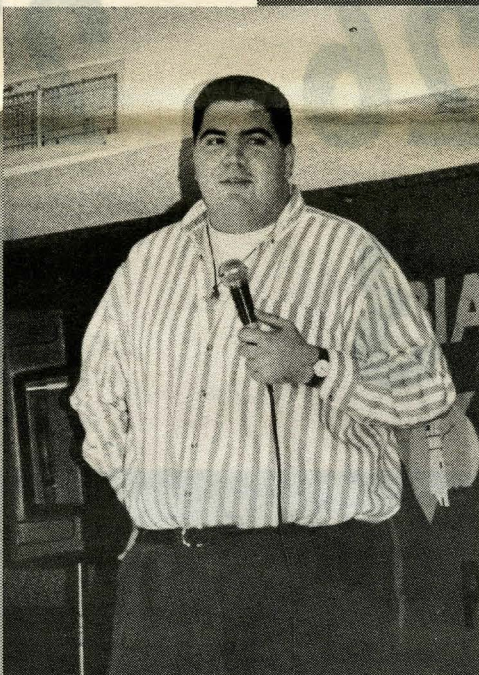
Awards....

Members of Equal Protection Lewiston accepted a Community Service Award at the March 5th ML/GPA Awards Banquet.



Benefits....

Chuck Roy, right, and Maria Esposito, below, entertained at a March 17 benefit for Maine Pride's Stonewall 25 Project



photos
by
Rebecca
Foster

and Entertainment...



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The Underground's March 6th "Kickin' Country" Show

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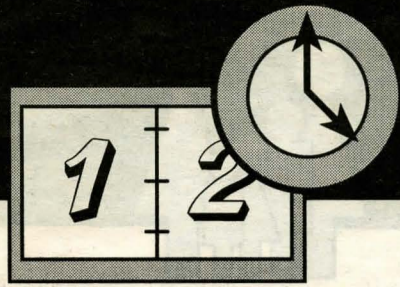
PHOTO: REBECCA FOSTER

PJ's crowned a new Ms. Lesbian PJ's on Friday, March 11. Competing for the title (l. to r. above) was Sharon Jackson, Cindy Standbach, Ileanaa Ruiz and Andrea Boynton.

Pictured right is Ileanaa Ruiz, Ms. Lesbian PJ's 1994, performing a traditional Cuban song, a capella, for the talent portion of the pageant.



PHOTO: REBECCA FOSTER



Listing of Events

Friday

1

8
es Benefit

5

22

29
ast Bisexual
Mtg.

6

Saturday

2
Easter Party
and Breakfast9
NH Pride Auction
and Dance16
MLGPA monthly
meeting
NLN Library/Potluck/
Game Night23
Libby Roderick
Daedalus Benefit30
Northeast Bisexual
Mtg.7
Religious Com-
munity as PartnerNLN's 14th
Anniversary

Do you have
any events you
would like to list
on this page?

If you would like your non-profit event or activity listed, send us the time, date, place, phone number and a brief description of the event or activity by the 20th of the month.

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PORTLAND, ME 04104

Benefit for people with AIDS hosted by Raffles Cafe Bookstore's Friday Night Music Series with Alternate Mediums, Friday, April 8. Acoustic performers Knots and Crosses, Tom Dean and Steve Gerlach. 7:30pm, 555 Congress St., Portland. For more information, call 761-3930.

Easter Party Breakfast at Northern Lambda Nord, Saturday April 2. For more information contact NLN at (207) 498-2088.

Daedalus Project, an annual AIDS benefit variety show will take place on April 23 at the Waterville Opera House, Waterville, Maine. Doors open at 7pm for a silent auction with the performance beginning at 8 pm. All proceeds benefit the Maine AIDS Alliance. Minimum donation of \$8.50 is requested. For more information, call 877-4142.

14th Anniversary Party and Dance. Celebrate Northern Lambda Nord's 14th Anniversary, May 7. For more information, call (207) 498-2088.

Library Time/Potluck/Game Night, sponsored by Northern Lambda Nord, on April 16, in New Sweden. For more information, contact NLN at (207) 498-2088.

"The Religious Community as a Partner in Social Action", a one-day conference sponsored by MaineShare. Topics to include funding from religious sources and the role of churches in social action. 9:30am-4:00pm, Sat. May 7 at Jewett Hall, University of Maine at Augusta. The site is wheelchair accessible. For more information, contact MaineShare at 622-0105.

Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance meets on the third Saturday of the month in Augusta. ML/GPA is a statewide, non-partisan organization formed to educate the public, politicians and the media concerning les-

bian and gay issues. Call 1-800-55-MLGPA for meeting time and place.

Northeast Bisexual Community Meeting, April 29 and 30, at Christ Church, 64 State St., Montpelier, Vt. Social event and registration on the 29th with 10am-5pm meeting on April 30. Lunch is provided on the 30th and an informal dinner will follow the meeting. Sponsored by the National Bisexual Network. For more information, contact Marina Perez at (617) 282-3537 or Stephanie Berger (617) 666-3149.

Libby Roderick in Concert, Saturday, April 23, 7pm at the Dover High School Auditorium, Dover, NH. A benefit for the Caring Unlimited, York County Center Against Domestic Vio-

Northern Lambda Nord Meeting, Sun. April 10th at 1pm, Lions Community Ctr., High St. (across from Shop N Save), Caribou.

Seacoast Gay Men (SGM) Spring Potluck, Monday, April 4 at the Unitarian-Universalist Church, downtown Portsmouth at 7pm. For more information, contact Al Santerre (603) 898-1115.

Hans Johnson, national spokesperson for "People for the American Way" will speak on the radical Christian agenda on gays, abortion and schools in a program sponsored by SGM and Unitarian Social Concerns on April 11 at 7 pm, Unitarian Church, State St., Portsmouth, NH. For more information, call Al Santerre at (603) 898-1115.

NH Pride's April Auction and Dance, Sat., April 9 at Pat's Peak, Henniker, NH. Dancing to begin directly after the auction. For more information, call (603) 382-9308.

NH Pride Committee meets every Tues., 7pm at Springfield College, Commercial St., Manchester, NH. (603) 382-9308.

State Senator Gerard P. Conley, Jr. sponsor of the Maine Human Rights Bill of 1993, reflects on politics, activism and human rights at the April 14 Matlovich Society meeting, 7:30pm at the Holiday-Inn-by-the-Bay, 88 Spring St., Portland. The site is wheelchair accessible. Free parking available. For more information, contact Howard Solomon at 773-1209.

Lizzy Poole, director of the new Free Radical will speak on the courage to dare at the Unitarian Church, Portsmouth, NH, Monday, April 18 at 7pm. The event is sponsored by the Seacoast Gay Men. For more information, contact Al Santerre at (603) 898-1115.

Stan Clough will discuss Walt Whitman and masculinity, a poetic biography Monday, April 25 at 7pm. The event is sponsored by the Seacoast Gay Men and will be held at the Unitarian Church, Portsmouth, NH. Call Al Santerre at (603) 898-1115 for more information.

Partners of Parents, meets every 3rd Monday, 7-9pm, at Woodfords' Congregational Church. Meetings provide support to lesbian and gay men whose partners have children. The groups is self-led and meets for discussion. For more information, call 774-5032.

Upcoming... Matlovich Society May Day Dance Benefit, May 1, 5pm-9pm, Zootz, Forest Ave., Portland. Admission \$5.


David Webb of KLANWATCH will discuss "Hate Groups and Hate Crimes in America: Gays and Lesbians under Attack.", on May 12 at the Holiday-Inn-by-the-Bay, 88 Spring St., Portland. The event is sponsored by the Matlovich Society and marks the Society's third anniversary. Wheelchair accessible. Free parking available. For information, call 773-1209.

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Mothers & Child

Choosing pregnancy Part One

by Maggie Fournier
Contributor

So you've decided that you want to become pregnant. Good for you! It has taken a lot of courage and perhaps more than a few sleepless nights to reach this point. Babies change our lives in ways one can't imagine and so does pregnancy.

Slow down! Let's take this one step at a time.

First thing to do is stop your consumption of *all* alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, caffeine, and drugs. Prescription drugs are another matter which warrant careful review by a physician. True, you're not pregnant yet, but ingestion of these substances might influence your ability to conceive and successfully carry a baby to term. Later, when you are pregnant, it will be important to refrain from smoking, drinking alcohol and taking caffeine because of the harmful effects of these materials (even small amounts) to the fetus.

Secondly, if you don't have a physician, now is the time to make some decisions. Ask friends and co-workers to share their opinions about who they see. If you know any lesbian moms, inquire if they might be willing to discuss their experiences with you. A obstetrical/gynecological practice which specializes in fertility issues is a good place to begin your search. A simple phone call can give you a great deal of information. Let's consider some important questions to ask.

1. Are you taking new clients?
2. Are you comfortable providing care to lesbians? Get this one right out on the table. If there is any hesitation or reservation on the part of the staff then, in all likelihood, this is not the practice you want. And don't settle for anything less. You deserve to be cared for by people who respect you and your partner as a lesbian couple. There plenty of ob/gyn practices in Maine that are open to lesbians, so be selective.
3. What are your fees and what will my insurance cover?
4. What will my out-of-pocket costs be?
5. Is it possible to set up a initial consultation visit with the physician? (It should be!) This is strong recommended.
6. Do you use a sperm bank which is approved by the American Fertility Association? Which sperm bank? (Check it out. They usually have 800 numbers.) Approved

sperm banks are crucial to your safety. Donors are carefully screened for HIV and numerous other sexually transmitted diseases as well as for genetic abnormalities. Sperm is frozen for 6 months before it is permitted to be released. This is to allow for a total of three HIV screenings of donor over the six month period to be certain that he is not HIV-positive. This standard is in compliance with the National Centers for Disease Control recommendations. The reason for the six month quarantine of sperm is that it can take between two to twelve weeks for the HIV antibodies to convert and in some rare cases up to six months.

Thirdly, purchase a digital or basal thermometer at your local pharmacy and take your oral temperature every morning *before* you do anything else. Don't even get up. Record your temperature immediately so that you don't forget. This data will be needed to help determine when you ovulate during your menstrual cycle. Most physicians like to see temperature records of three cycles or more before they can determine the optimum time to inseminate. Since you will most likely have to wait for an appointment anyway, you might as well get a jump on things. Ovulation predictor kits, while not 100% reliable, can be helpful, too. Be prepared, they're expensive!

Finally, when you have decided on a physician, make an appointment for an initial physical exam which will include a pap smear, mammogram if indicated, and routine blood and urine tests. You will want to be in good health before embarking on a pregnancy. This first appointment will be a perfect time to have lots of your questions answered. And be sure your partner is right in there with you for the entire visit. Don't be surprised if your physician suggests further tests, but do get a full explanation. Keep in mind that, on average, it takes between before four and six inseminations for conception to result. Patience is a virtue!

More to come on this topic..

Maggie Fournier is an associate professor of nursing at the University of Southern Maine. She is currently conducting research on the topic of co-mothering and is writing a book on lesbian parenting with her partner, Cheryl Ciechomski. Maggie and Cheryl live in Portland, Maine, with their seven year-old daughter, Emily.

Maine Lesbian & Gay Law Association

National legal trends

by Will Sandstead, Esq.
Contributor

HIV Status and Privacy

On February 1, a federal appeals court reinstated a civil rights suit brought by John Doe against the City of New York Commission on Human Rights (HRC). Doe's suit alleges that HRC violated his constitutional right to privacy when HRC publicly disclosed the details of a conciliation agreement which settled John Doe's HIV discrimination complaint brought to HRC against Delta Airlines.

The conciliation agreement, which was signed by both HRC and Doe, provided that Doe's name would not be disclosed without his written consent. Nonetheless, HRC revealed Doe's identity in a press release. Although Doe's name was not mentioned, the release contained enough information to allow those acquainted with him to identify him as the person described. Doe asserts that the disclosure caused him great embarrassment and made him the target of discrimination and ostracism.

The Court held that there is a recognized constitutional right to privacy in personal information which can be characterized as a right to confidentiality. The Court recognized that there are few matters as personal as one's health and stated that "an individual's choice to inform others...is one that she should normally be allowed to make for herself." The Court continued, "An individual revealing that she is HIV positive potentially exposes herself not to understanding or compassion but to discrimination and intolerance, further necessitating the extension of the right to confidentiality over such information. We therefore hold that Doe possesses a constitutional right to confidentiality..."

This right only protects disclosures by the state and private individuals and, further, only if the state has no "substantial interest" in the public disclosure. The case was remanded to District Court for trial on the "substantial interest" question. *Doe v. City of New York*, 1994 WL 24213 (2nd Cir.).

Child Custody

A California court rejected the claim of a lesbian who sought joint custody rights to the biological child of her former partner. The lesbian partners had formed a written agreement regarding custody before their breakup. However, the Court held that the agreement was unenforceable and could not be used to counter existing caselaw under which a non-biological partner/mother has no right to child custody. The partner had raised the child together for over

five years before the biological mother claimed sole custody and moved to another county. The case, *Georgia P. v. Kerry B.*, is currently unpublished.

On February 16, the Virginia Court of Appeals heard oral argument in the notorious *Bottoms v. Bottoms* case, where a judge gave custody of Sharon Bottoms' son to her mother Kay, on the grounds that Sharon was an unfit mother, under Virginia law, because she was engaged in a same-sex relationship. Observers at oral argument reported that some of the judges were rather hard on Kay's attorney. A decision should be handed down in a few months.

Legislative proposals are pending in South Carolina and Washington state which would prohibit gay and lesbian adoptions of children. The measure in South Carolina passed the House of Representatives and has the support of the governor. So far, the only states which have legislative bans on lesbians and gays adopting children are New Hampshire and Florida. Gay adoptions of children, however, have been approved in several states, and last year the Vermont and Massachusetts high courts approved such adoptions.

Anti-Gay Housing Discrimination

A New York court approved an award of \$100,000 in damages and \$75,000 in civil penalties against a residential landlord who refused to renew a gay tenant's lease in addition to harassing him because he was gay. The court found ample evidence of "a prolonged pattern of discriminatory acts of harassment," which included interruptions of telephone and electricity services, unlawful entries into the apartment, menacing telephone calls and vile name calling. The monetary award has been described as one of the largest of its kind. *119-121 East 97th St. Corp. v. City of N.Y. Comm. on Human Rights*, N.Y. Law J., 2/9/94, p. 22.

Hate Crime Statutes

In two unrelated cases, the Florida and Missouri high courts upheld the hate crime laws in those states. Each statute provides for the enhancement of sentencing for certain crimes, where the offense was motivated, at least in part, by ethnic, racial or religious bias. The Florida statute also covered hatred based on ancestry or sexual orientation. *State of Florida v. Stalder*, 1994 WL 19548 (Jan. 27); *State of Missouri v. Vanatter*, 1994 WL 17466 (Jan. 25).

Source: Lesbian/Gay Law Notes, March 1994.

Will Sandstead is an interim board member of the Maine Lesbian and Gay Law Association (MeLeGaL) and is an associate at Farnsworth & Associates in Hallowell.

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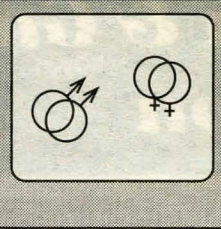
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Yagottawanna, performed with Heartstrings and Kim Volk on March 12th Wild Iris Productions tripleheader.

Video Reviews



Men according to Tom of Finland

by Douglas Packard
Contributor

Are you a Tom's man? Do you enjoy "real" men? Do you prefer men in leather or uniforms? Then you are a Tom's man. Tom, of course, refers to Tom of Finland. The absolute physical perfection of a real man who is beautiful without being too pretty and never, never too masculine. Tom is a man who prefers leather and uniforms over the latest fashion tips and stylish haircuts, and sports the ultimate in pectorals gluts and abs, plus another extremity which I will leave to your imagination. He is the man that is developed just beyond the realms of human capacity, but no so far beyond that you give up looking for him, because you know he just might be out there.

The story behind "Tom's men" and a slice of gay culture is the subject of "Daddy and the Muscle Academy: the Art, Life and Times of Tom of Finland." The originator of Tom of Finland is a 70-plus year-old Finnish man who is committed to the art of eroticism. The movie, in Finnish with English subtitles, is a synopsis of Tom's entire life. The first pair of leather boots he owned, ironically given to him by his parents as a birthday present. His first sexual experiences happened during World War I, interestingly enough with German soldiers.

The film also documents the various influences that inspired the creation of his characters and follows the development of Tom of Finland from his early renditions of pretty boys to a more mature masculine self. At the same time showing that there is/was

more to Tom of Finland than a gorgeous body.

Interspersed with Tom the artist's explanations of his life, work and drawings, are small interviews with some of "Tom's men" discussing why they are his followers and emulate the character of Tom of Finland. Their explanations range from the idea that dressing like Tom helps one to

. . . until one Tom's man saw a Tom of Finland drawing, he didn't know that he could be maculine and gay at the same time. . .

escape from reality to the belief that it is the ideal image of masculinity and sexuality. In fact, until one Tom's man saw a Tom of Finland drawing, he didn't know that he could be gay and masculine at the same time.

The film will increase the viewer's knowledge about another facet of gay society and is recommended for that purpose. On the other hand, do not expect it to titillate with all its leather and chains, unless that is attractive and the Tom of Finland "wannabees" may not be attractive after a close look. However, after the film provides a learning experience about men who prefer leather and uniforms as well as the artist who created the fantasy that keeps so many men happy.

Do you know your rights under the ADA?

If you are HIV-positive, you may have protection under the Americans with Disabilities Act(ADA) in employment, public services and public accommodations.

For more information, contact the ADA Technical Assistance Center

(a federally funded information source)

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STONEWALL
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& 60s NIGHT

'69 fashion show
face painting
re-enactment of stonewall

Thursdays
Country Music

Correction

In last month's coverage of the Hospice Standards bill before the Joint Committee on Human Resources, 10% inadvertently substituted the word "Medicaid" for "Medicare".

The article should have referred to Medicare standards. 10% apologizes for any inconvenience or misunderstanding this error caused.

Fitness

Nutrition and HIV

by **Martha Atherholt II**
Contributor

Diet is an integral part of the function of the human body. It determines the multitude of processes which occur in our bodies on a daily basis. These processes range from how much energy we have to which hormones are released into the bloodstream. All in all it can be said that the better we eat, the better we feel.

For those living with HIV, nutrition is an even more important part of their lifestyle. A healthy diet and regular exercise can literally mean the difference between life and death.

But as we look through the multitude of articles on health and nutrition, there seems to be an underlying controversy as to what actually constitutes a healthy diet. With regard to those living with HIV, there are specific guidelines which have proven successful in assisting the immune system to function at full capacity.

In his book, *Immune Power*, Dr. Jon Kaiser has compiled these guidelines into what he calls the Immune Enhancement Diet. The basic premise behind this program is that it is important to keep the diet as natural and minimally processed as possible. This prevents the body from being exposed to chemicals which may affect its functioning in a negative way. Because the body has such unusually high metabolic needs in the presence of an HIV infection, it is also important that the diet contain an abundance of vitamins, minerals, calories and protein. By keeping these in abundance, the immune system will also be supported and strengthened.

Here are the general principles of the Immune Enhancement Diet:

1. Increase your consumption of whole grains, vegetables and fresh fruit.
2. Increase your consumption of natural soups, teas and warm beverages.

(ice-cold beverages take more energy to warm them up.)

3. Eat a nutritious breakfast every day.
4. Eat plenty of onions garlic and ginger.
5. When cooking with oils, use only high-quality olive and sesame.
6. Eat an adequate amount of protein each day. For the average adult, .04 grams per pound of body weight is good.
7. Limit your dairy consumption to 5% of your total diet.
8. Avoid sugar, alcohol and caffeine.
9. Avoid raw foods such as clams, oysters, uncooked fish sushi and very rare meats. These contain infectious bacteria and intestinal parasites.
10. Combine and balance foods properly. Do not eat fruits and vegetables at the same time. When eaten together, they promote inefficient digestion due to the differing enzymes and digestive time that each requires.

Keep in mind that the principles outlined here are not solely for those who are HIV positive. These are general guidelines which can be useful to anyone striving for a healthier and more nutritious diet.

"Let thy food be thy medicine, and thy medicine thy food."
—Hippocrates

Martha Atherholt is the Director of Fitness at the Bay Club in Portland. She holds a degree in Exercise Science from the University of Maine and has experience working with various exercise treatment programs.

Are You Listed?

If you would like your non-profit event or activity listed in the 10% calendar, send us the time, date, place, phone number and a brief description of the event by the 20th of the month.

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Safer Sex Tip #1

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PAWS

Pets Are Wonderful Support

PAWS is a volunteer organization that helps improve the quality of life for persons with HIV/AIDS by giving support for their pets and providing information on the risks and benefits of animal companionship.

If you are interested in helping to form a Maine Chapter of PAWS, contact Jon Piefer or Charles Wynott at 118 Brackett St. Portland, ME 04102

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This thirties GM is rather cute (blue eyes, runner's build), bright enough (Ivy League way back when), good-hearted (in the helping professions, card-carrying liberal), out (it took awhile, but hey), active (Zootzing, skiing, running), well-rounded (pianist, writer, French-speaker) and single. Go figure. And you? BOX #04-01

Very established gay male couple looking for a third partner. What we are looking for is a loving & caring 3-way relationship. We are attractive, in our early-30s, sexually versatile. Please send photo. No fats or fems. HIV status unimportant with the right person. BOX #04-02

Free, but not cheap. 30+, scoping for cute (me & you), sound, financially stable, 29-39, snappy dresser with all her teeth, who loves life & canine companionship. Get your pen out & give it your best shot! BOX #03-02

Young, affectionate, and very lonely seeking someone to hold at night, and someone who wants to care for me. I am 6', 175 lbs, dark brown hair, blue eyes, very goodlooking, yet lost in a world of pettiness and backstabbers. By my knight. Student at UMO, 21. Seeking same age and build. BOX #04-03

GF, a very young 40, good looking, seeks woman 30-40 with strong sense of self, honesty, sense of humor, who loves an active lifestyle, biking, skiing, skating, anything outdoors. Must love cats, HBO and pizza. Write! What have you got to lose? BOX #03-01

HIV-negative Taurus, middle-age, fairly trim, Country Music fan, romantic. Like ocean waves, hiking, cooking, XXX movies, sightseeing, hairy chests, 40-50s. Don't like heavies, fems, drugs, booze, tobacco. I pay my own way; expect same from you. Can we meet and talk? Expect no more at first meeting, but...? Portland, Lewiston, Brunswick. BOX #04-04

Son wanted by GWM 49, who is loving, healthy, sincere, supportive, encouraging and caring. Let's enjoy long walks, the outdoors, the beach, travel, some arts, antiques, exploring new ideas, sex, etc. If you need a real friend contact me. BOX #04-05.

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National Events Calendar

The listing below is a quick look at some major national and international events of interest with a telephone number to receive more information.

June 3-4 African American Lesbian and Gay Performance Festival, Los Angeles
(310) 453-1755

June 18-25 Gay Games IV, New York
(212) 633-9494

June 22 Disabled Women's Symposium, Rockville, Md.
(212) 772-4723

June 26 Stonewall 25, International March on the U.N. to Affirm the Human Rights of Lesbians and Gay People, New York
(212) 439-1031

July 1-4 NOW Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX
(202) 331-0066

August 3-7 1st Annual Womynist of Color Conference, National Womynist of Color Organization, St. Paul, MN
(612) 825-6508

August 7-12 10th International Conference on AIDS & STD International Conference, Yokohama, Japan
41-22-791-2111(Geneva)

August 9-12 Michigan's Womyn's Music Festival
(616) 757-4766

September 1-5 West Coast Women's Music and Comedy Festival, Yosemite, CA
(818) 893-4075

October 8 National Women's Hall of Fame National Honors Ceremonies, Seneca Falls, NY
(315) 568-8060

Review

Odd Girls and "Before Stonewall" are good prep for 25th Anniversary

by Lise Wagner
Contributor

This June marks the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in New York City. The Stonewall Inn was a gay bar in Greenwich Village which was raided by the police one time too many on Friday night, June 27, 1969. The Riots, which took place over several nights, were considered the first time gays (and a few lesbians) openly, and angrily, reacted to police power and intimidation. Often viewed as sparking the gay liberation movement, the Stonewall Riots are a symbol for gays and lesbians finding their voice amidst the liberation struggles of women, blacks, and other oppressed groups.

The anger unleashed at the Stonewall incident did not rise up out of thin air. Lesbians and gay men have a great deal of history which is often overlooked and certainly is not taught in schools. Self-education, therefore, is virtually the only way to learn about gay and lesbian history. It is important, when frustration creeps in at how slowly the fight for equality and justice seems to be moving, to be reminded how large the Closet was only a short time ago.

Before Stonewall: The Making of a Gay and Lesbian Community is a 1984 award-winning documentary which, through interviews, photos, and film footage, captures the lives of gays and lesbians before the Riots. Narrated by Rita Mae Brown, the 87-minute film provides insight into the isolation and fear felt by a group of people who, even still in the 1960s, debated among themselves whether their sexual orientation stemmed from a mental disorder.

The documentary has marvelous film footage from the early twentieth century "twilight world" in which lesbians and gay men lived. World War II is highlighted as time when lesbians and gay men became less isolated and more liberated while in the service of their country. It also clearly shows how the military used gays and lesbians, turning a blind eye to their lifestyle when it served the establishment's needs, but persecuting them as soon as McCarthyism was in vogue. It is amazing how similar the past is to the present.

Renting this film is the least lesbians and gay men can do to learn about the background to today's continuing struggle for tolerance in our society. For a more in-depth history of lesbian life, Lillian Faderman's 1991 book, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers*, is highly recommended. It is an extremely well researched and fascinating review of women loving women in this century.

"Romantic friendships" between women were not only tolerated, but admired in the late 1800s and into the twentieth century. For women

who were raised to be dependents, the usual means of support was first a father, then a husband. A family of a woman who did not marry was generally more than happy to allow the (unfortunately) educated daughter to set up housekeeping with another woman, thus relieving the family of its "financial burden." Faderman points to notable women such as Jane Addams (founder of Hull House and Nobel Peace Prize winner) and M. Carey Thomas (president of Bryn Mawr College) as two highly educated women who each had a "devoted companion."

It...clearly shows how the military used gays and lesbians, turning a blind eye to their lifestyle when it served the establishment's needs, but persecuting them as soon as McCarthyism was in vogue.

Odd Girls travels through the "experimentation" years of the 1920s, when being lesbian was an accepted bohemian way to spend a weekend. It details how women often had exclusively lesbian relationships while at an all-female college, but were generally forced to become at least bisexual once they left that protective environment. The history continues in the war years during which there was relative acceptance of frequently entirely lesbian WAC units in the Army. As does the Stonewall documentary, *Odd Girls* highlights the initial tolerance of lesbian relationships in the military, but notes how quickly thereafter lesbians were designated as "sick" and ultimately communist and outcast.

One of the most interesting aspects of Faderman's work is her clear identification of the enormous differences among lesbians over the years. She describes the butch and femme roles essential to the lesbian subculture of the 1950s and '60s. She points out the class and racial lines that were often crossed only in one direction. Especially intriguing is the whole atmosphere of "political correctness" that surrounded, and eventually destroyed, the growth of women-centered communities in the 1970s.

Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers is a marvelous book which should be read at least by every lesbian, even if only a bit at a time. *Before Stonewall* offers a good dose of history in a little over an hour. Take the opportunity to be educated, particularly when there are books and documentaries as fine as these two.

Baiting in Drag

fiction by Tara Luce

I have been baiting in drag since I was seventeen. I have an exact image of the moment it started. I was going into the Northern Trust Bank in the city. I held the door open real polite for a good-looking woman, who was about twenty-five. I mean really stepped back with a flourish. She had been ready to blow by, but she hesitated. She was flattered. I looked like a clean-cut shortstop. A wet-behind-the-ears, too-cute kid, who she could think about sleeping with despite herself.

She smiled and said "Thank you", with every intention of making me blush. So that she could see me blush. My ears blushed red for the rest of the day.

I blushed clear down to my stomach. Now, I'd been sleeping with women for eight years so it wasn't inexperience that made my stomach clench. It was that she was obviously heterosexual and she had obviously taken me for a boy. I'd known for a long time that I didn't look particularly feminine but I had never considered the fact that I made a very attractive straight college boy.

I went home that afternoon and examined myself in the mirror. I am broad shouldered, flat-chested, slim-waisted, clear complected with deep brown hair, but it is definitely my eyes that trap them. In the mirror, I decided that the lack of make-up on either my eyes or brows helped to seal the assumptions.

It was that she was obviously heterosexual and she had obviously taken me for a boy.

Also I'd been listening to my female friends, most of whom I'd slept with, dissect boys so I knew what women found attractive about men. But since, I've decided that it is solely the eyes, or rather the act of making eye contact. I can pick up any woman I want, as long as I make eye contact.

The first step of the plan was to get a fake ID. I went to

the same guy I'd gone to for my first ID, the one that gets me into dyke bars. He's this old gay guy who thought it was a real trip I was putting one over on "breeder women". He thinks of them as the lowest of the low. I'm secretly in love with every one of the ones I pick up and that's the reason my plan works.

See women are looking for something that men can't give them. Something that I can. All of which can be communicated through the eyes; compassion, empathy, vulnerability, and it the ability to love unselfishly. Though in all honesty it is not an unselfish thing that I do because it has to end.

I do it because I am looking for that straight woman who could love me for a year without finding out.

And in the end it's always a little cruel. I never give out my number and I rarely call them back. I've only gone so far as to kiss a woman once. It was a mistake. I fell more deeply in love than I have ever been in my life. Though I wanted to call her back, more than any of the others Shelly was the one I couldn't. She'd have been the one I slipped up with.

To tell you the truth I do it because I don't get much from lesbians, even the real feminine ones. I do it because I am looking for that straight woman who could love me for a year without finding out. Like Yentl. Because some day I'll tell one of them the truth and she'll kiss me anyway. That will be the test. If she can love me in the same way a woman could love a man, if men were better at loving. She'll be the one, so you see, it is all very necessary.



Augusta area male illusionist, Stephon performed at the March 11 Ms. Lesbian PJ's pageant. Above, PJ's owner Dick Aube with Stephon.

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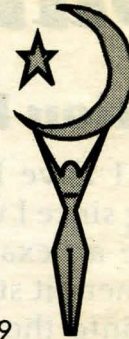
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