

N E T W O R K I N G NORTH

VOLUME 10 • ISSUE 4 • JULY • AUGUST • 1996

TRAVERSE CITY TURNS ITS BACK ON GAYS/LESBIANS:

—HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION LOSES POWER

Jim Poole

In a June 17 meeting the Traverse City City Commission voted 4 to 3 to reject a proposal by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) to amend the city personnel nondiscrimination policy to include the words "sexual orientation." In opposition were Commissioners Jasper Weese, Shelley Kester, Jack Tompkins, and Phil Orth. In support were Commissioners Lary Hardy, Jack Boynton, and Mayor Peter Taylor. In an identical vote that followed, the city commission passed a motion by Shelley Kester to give the city commission the option to review claims of discrimination before sending them to the Human Rights Commission. Under the original policy, the city commission automatically referred claims of discrimination appealed by the city manager to the HRC, which would then investigate the claim, perform mediation, and report their findings to the city commission.

The new policy will now allow the city commission to reject a claim based on sexual orientation without any investigation or mediation by the HRC. Commissioner Kester said that the HRC may not be adequately trained to handle some claims. "My concern is I don't know of anyone on the commission (and maybe someone can advise me of anyone) having skills in employment issues," she said.

Commissioners Hardy and Boynton said that having the city commission take claims could leave cases open for public debate. "If it comes here it's going to be a community affair before you ever get started," said Hardy. He also said that people may not make claims for fear of being exposed in public meetings.

"If it becomes a matter of debate with us each time to make our own individual decision as to whether or not it goes to the HRC, I think that's unnecessary and counterproductive," Boynton said.

Commissioner Tompkins said that the HRC could be used as an advisory body under the city commission's discretion. "It

seems to me that you're bringing that much more involvement in that we might be able to avoid," Thompkins said.

Each commissioner spoke before voting on amending the personnel policy to include sexual orientation. Here are some comments from each commissioner:

Taylor: "So long as there are intolerant people, I believe, in the world, that's the very reason why we need to have the words 'sexual orientation' included in this policy."

Boynton: "I think that this proposal is a poor second. I have been on record for not liking lists." "It requires people to keep coming before us to petition us for rights which I think they were born with and are inalienable."

Hardy: "We've got to be fair, we've got to be just, and they've got to know that they're not going to be discriminated against."

Kester: "I think the policy we have right now is working, and I'm going to support the continuation of what we've been doing, which is continue to hire gay and lesbian people."

Tompkins: "If we make changes in the policy, I think it implies to the community, and implies to Richard (Lewis) that we think maybe something isn't quite the way it should be in our organization, and that maybe there is some discrimination."

Orth: "(If we expect our elected officials to be absent of values or standards), we're going to run into a lot of difficulty not only at this level, but at levels of government though be it state or the federal levels or any others."

Weese: "I can not support this motion or any motion that has to do with forcing their lifestyle on me or me forcing mine on their's."



FROM THE EDITOR

Ah, summer, when life is supposed to slow down enough to enjoy everything that we missed the rest of the year. But, lest we get too comfortable biking and bay-swimming, let's not forget that the world of politics is still marching on. After all, it's an election year—an important one—in which gays and lesbians are in the spotlight. Keep an eye on the Republican convention in San Diego later this month. Look for the attention that's paid to Pat Buchanan, Pat Robertson, and Ralph Reed of the Christian Coalition. Let's watch to see how they ally themselves, or perhaps, divide themselves.

A lot has happened since the last election four years ago. The American public learned how to say "gay" and "lesbian" without flinching. They became educated by our media to a great extent, and, even those living in Small Mind, USA appear to be somewhat savvy. However, there is still a long way to go in understanding that gays and lesbians live their lives the same as everyone else does. And, yes, most straights still presume that everyone is straight until proven otherwise.

Along with this new attention, it seems that the media drew a line in the sand. People were asked to take sides, and now, everyone has expressed opinions about gay and lesbian rights—from job protection to marriage and military service to adopting children. We now know who our friends are as well as our enemies, which makes us far better off as a movement.

There have been some major disappointments in the last few months, too. Governor Engler just signed into law the bill which penalizes those educational institutions which grant health benefits to the partners of its gay and lesbian employees. Today this includes Wayne State University and the University of Michigan. We have local Senator McManus to thank for this unnecessary and discriminatory piece of legislation. In another self-serving move, Michigan legislators also banned recognition of same-sex marriage.

Locally, we were dealt a blow by the Traverse City City Commission in adding "sexual orientation" to the list of protected classes governing City hiring policies. On the bright side, we received support from some extraordinary, fair-minded people in the community, such as Mayor Peter Taylor. We also viewed a few ignorant and outlandish displays of ego and avoidance, such as the performance by City Commissioner Jim Tompkins. On the light, yet frightening, side was Commissioner Weese, whose ignorant, rambling remarks simply awestruck the crowd. But, again, sides were drawn, and we have found our friends—those who believe in fairness—and our enemies—those who prefer to maintain discrimination and the status quo.

It was a pleasant surprise that same week to receive the June issue of *The New Yorker*. The front cover featured a drawing of two male sailors in a passionate kiss in the middle of a crowded

Friends North, Inc., P.O. Box 562, Traverse City, MI 49685-0562 (616) 946-1804 (This is a general information line to receive F/N information.)

FRIENDS NORTH is an organization of lesbians, gay men, bi-sexuals and their friends from northwestern lower Michigan. Located in Traverse City, we provide social activities, a newsletter, phone line, workshops, and a community needs fund for financial assistance.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS of FRIENDS NORTH is composed of nine women and men elected each December. Regular board meetings are held at Northwestern Michigan College, West Hall, Room 2 in the cafeteria the first Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Tom LaForte	Victor Dinsmoore—secretary	M'Lynn Hartwell
Tim Evans	Tom Kincaid—VP	Carol Lambertson—Pres.
Julie Parker	Jim Poole	Scott Southwell—treasurer

Networking 45° North, P.O. Box 562, Traverse City, MI 49685-0562

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE: Publication of *Networking 45° North*.

Editor: Richard Tuxbury: 271-3042
or e-mail: tux001@aol.com

Publishing & Layout: Richard Curtis: 929-9605
or e-mail: rcurtis695@aol.com

Advertising: Jim Carruthers: 922-7768
Mailing List: John Evans: 922-0746

Networking 45° North is the newsletter of Friends North, Inc. Viewpoints expressed do not necessarily represent those of the board or general membership.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING and notices are run without charge. Please submit in writing or by calling the editor (and leave ad on machine 271-3042 or by email.)

DISPLAY ADVERTISING in *Networking 45° North* is available in Business Card size - \$25.00 per space per issue or an annual rate of \$120.00 for 6 issues. Inserts and larger sized ads are available. Please call 'advertising' for rates.

SPONSORING POLITICAL POSTCARDS: Cost for printing 2,800 postcards for *Networking 45° North* is \$100.00. To sponsor all or part of this, and to give your input, call Richard 271-3042.

CONTRIBUTIONS to *Networking* are welcome. Letters, essays, features, reflections, and original artwork should be sent "c/o Editor" to above address. (*Networking* will not accept material that is sexist, discriminatory or sexually explicit. Contributors are responsible for obtaining permission from those whose names they submit for publication.)

DEADLINES: Issue #5—August 15; Issue #6—October 15.

ADDRESS CHANGES: Please notify us in advance if a change is coming. Call John Evans, 922-0746, or send changes to our address.

SUBSCRIPTIONS/MEMBERSHIPS: \$15.00/single; \$25.00/couple. Please send checks or money orders to: Friends North, P.O. Box 562, Traverse City, MI 49685-0562.

DISTRIBUTION: *Networking* is published 6 times per year. Copies are sent bulk-mail in a plain envelope to approximately 700 households. Additional copies are available at select local establishments. Our mailing list is not sold or traded with other organizations.



printed on recycled paper

New York street. The caption was 'Don't Ask.' Thank you, editor Tina Brown for once again giving us your cover.

Dean and Cindy Robb were incredible hosts at our gay pride celebration. They opened their home and farm to us for that Saturday afternoon, and the event went off beautifully. About 250 people came and joined in the picnic and gathering: some played volleyball and others socialized. Twelve people participated in the morning's bike ride in Leelanau County. Thanks again to Cindy and Dean, as well as to Frank Noverr, from Noverr Publishing, whose donation provided for the catered picnic lunch.

Richard Tuxbury

Carol Lambertson



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Many of you know that Jim Ingleson resigned as President of Friends North, effective with our May Board Meeting. Please continue to support Jim with your kind thoughts as he heals from the tragic and sudden death of his life partner, Kevin, in January. We love you Jim!

The Friends North Board has suffered another loss since May. Greg Baird has moved on to work in California. Greg contributed many hours of service to Friends North, and could always be counted on to attend all meetings and functions. We will miss him greatly, and we wish him luck and success in his new ventures. Greg promises to keep in touch via the newsletter as soon as he is settled.

At our June Board Meeting, then, we had two vacancies to fill by nomination and election. Tom LaForte, who works in Traverse City and currently resides in Boyne Falls, and Tim Evans of Petoskey will serve for the remainder of the year. We are grateful for their energy and enthusiasm.

The completed Board then elected a new President and Vice President. Tom Kincaid will execute the VP role, backing me up

with his many years of experience with Friends North and our local community.

Happy Gay Pride month! It was indeed a time to celebrate, with the recent victory in the US Supreme Court. The decision on May 20, 1996 regarding Colorado's Amendment 2 is a profound victory for all who believe in basic equal rights and the principle that all Americans deserve to live free from discrimination and hate crimes.

On a more local note, however, it appears that we still have our work cut out for us. The Traverse City City Commission again voted against adding 'sexual orientation' to the City's hiring policy. In spite of very moving and eloquent comments from area ministers, an attorney, a psychologist, parents of gays, and citizens, as well as members of the g/l/b community, the amendment was voted down 4-3. I would like to thank everyone who has worked on this issue so far, including those people who came to the city commission meetings to show support.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of you out there for supporting Friends North by renewing your newsletter subscription, by including extra money as a donation to our organization, and by attending our social events. Without this kind of participation we would not be able to continue. THANK YOU! We also appreciate feedback; your letters, phone calls and comments are important. Keep them coming!

Friends North is pleased to announce that in conjunction with PFLAG and a generous donation, we will be establishing a toll-free telephone "helpline" which will be answered by a trained person 24 hours a day. We hope to implement this before the end of the year. Watch Networking 45° North for updates.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone to register and BE SURE TO VOTE in November. This is the best way to "be counted". We will do our best to keep you informed of various issues so that you can make shrewd choices at the polls.

I look forward to serving you as President of Friends North and invite you to contact me with any concerns, questions or comments to improve our organization. Call me at 929-7476.

Carol Lambertson

dive/coach.

SCUBA DIVING INSTRUCTION

Private and CD ROM home study courses available

Glenn Sanford, certified NAUI instructor
(616) 946-0433

2671 Shenandoah Drive
Traverse City, Michigan 49684-8922

 *Madeleine*
THOMAS
for **DISTRICT JUDGE**

PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT THOMAS FOR JUDGE, BOB BRICK, TREASURER



Out,ⁿ + About

A Lesbian Coffeehouse

Unity Church - 3600 Five Mile Road - Traverse City
Call 946-2708 for more information

The Summer heat is high. Traffic is as heavy as a Traverse City Cherry Festival parade day. Work is at an all time overload and you were just handed a new project that was due yesterday. The rent and utility bills are two weeks late. The pets are snarling because your last quality time with them was prior to the Solstice. "What did you say your name was," she queried?

Girlfriend! It's time to ESCAPE! Take yourself off to an evening of "Magic, Music, Mystics & Massage" at the July Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse. Leave the hustle and bustle at our front door and join with others in a relaxing atmosphere that affords a respite from the usual wild, wide world that surrounds us. This coffeehouse will feature a variety of active and passive areas where you can enjoy a professional neck and shoulder massage, or sit to build a dreamcatcher for yourself or a special someone. Mask-making and creating a wise-woman walking stick may be your choice; or connecting with others in a circle of drumming and song. Other pastimes will be available, too.

The Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse will be open from 7 pm until 11 pm on Saturday, July 20. Come and celebrate peace with old and new friends.

The Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse is managed by an informal gathering of lesbians who call themselves the Steering Committee. This committee meets for a few hours on the Monday prior to the 3rd Saturday coffeehouse for planning of each month's event. The Committee is always seeking input from you, the lesbian community, about what or who Out 'n About should feature in upcoming months. Please consider joining the Steering Committee so that your ideas can be heard and so that you can make a positive impact on your own community.

Out n' About Lesbian Coffeehouse is held on the third Saturday of each month except August and December. The Coffeehouse comes alive between 7:00 and 11:00 pm at the Unity Church, 3600 Five Mile Road, Traverse City. Smoke-free and Chem-free with a cover donation of \$3 (\$5-\$10 if we have entertainment). Coffee, tea and snacks are free; soft drinks are available.

For more information, or to have your name placed on the Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse mailing list, call Brenda at 946-2708—leave message. (Please note this telephone number is for Coffeehouse information only. If you have other questions or needs, please call Friends North at 946-1804.)

FRIENDS NORTH GAY AND LESBIAN HISTORY AND EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Friends North will be sponsoring the second annual Gay and Lesbian History and Education Conference the weekend of October 25th through 27th at the Sugar Loaf Resort, located on the Leelanau Peninsula near Traverse City. The activities will begin with a hospitality gathering and registration on Friday night. On Saturday, registration will take place between 8:00 and 9:00 am with the conference starting at 9:00 am. The conference will officially close at an informal breakfast on Sunday morning.

Saturday will be filled with two keynote addresses, six workshops, a luncheon, one-act stage readings, an outdoor walk-about, and a dance.

The workshops will include Gay and Lesbian Teachers, Lesbians/Gays and the Media: Diversity in Our Community; Local Gay/Lesbian Rights Ordinances; History Spotlights; and Generation Issues. The registration fee for the conference will be \$25.00 which includes all presentations, lunch, and the dance. Please locate the conference registration form in the center of this newsletter and send them in early.

The Resort is reserving rooms for this Friends North event at the low conference rate of \$52.00 per night. The Resort does request that you fill out the registration form located in the center of the newsletter, and mail it in with the \$50.00 required deposit, as soon as possible. Reservations cannot be accepted by phone.

PLEASE NOTE: REGISTRATION FOR THE HOTEL IS SEPARATE FROM THE CONFERENCE REGISTRATION.

Call for Booths/Displays

There will be eight (8) foot tables available for booths/displays at the Gay and Lesbian History and Education Conference. The cost for the tables is \$15.00 each. Set up time will be available Friday night to be ready for the conference on Saturday morning.

Anyone and/or organization who is interested in signing up for a table, please send \$15.00 with your name, address, phone, and type of display/booths to Friends North, PO Box 562, Traverse City, MI 49685-0562.

Bay Business Services Inc.

Office: (616) 941-5748

ANDREW L. MITCHELL

Accounting & Tax Service

810-B South Garfield Ave • Traverse City, MI 49686

R E S O U R C E S

STATE AND NATIONAL HOTLINES

Department of Justice Hotline (for reporting
Hate Crimes against gays and lesbians) 800-347-HATE
Child Abuse Hotline 800-392-8222
Michigan Wellness Networks 800-872-AIDS
Gay/Lesbian National Youth Hotline 800-347-TEEN

STATEWIDE SERVICES SOCIAL / POLITICAL / MEDIA

The Network: Lesbian and Gay Community Network of W. Michigan
909 Cherry St. S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49506 616-458-3511
Lavender Morning
P.O. Box 729, Kalamazoo, MI 49005 616-685-6061
Kalamazoo Resource Center
P.O. Box 1532, Kalamazoo, MI 49005 616-345-7878
Affirmations Lesbian/Gay Community Center
Suite 110, 195 W. Nine Mile Rd.
Ferndale, MI 48220 313-398-GAYS
<http://www.webspace.com/~tcc/affirmations/index.htm>
Lansing Association of Human Rights
P.O. Box 18062, Lansing, MI 48826 517-332-3200
Capital Men's Club
P.O. Box 18062, Lansing, MI 48902 (Kelly Stevens) 517-482-0860
Ambitious Amazons/Lesbian Connection
P.O. Box 811, East Lansing, MI 48826 517-371-5257
Lesbian Alliance
P.O. Box 6423, East Lansing, MI 48826 517-394-1454
Triangle Foundation (Lesbian/Gay Foundation of Michigan)
19641 W. Seven Mile Rd., Detroit 48219 313-537-3323
..... Fax: 313-537-3379
email trijeffm@aol.com
PRIDE-Flint: P.O. Box 7014, Flint, MI 48507 313-238-9854
Aurora Newsletter: (reaching out to gays, lesbians, bisexuals in the UP &
Canada) POB 626, Marquette, MI 49855
Team Great Lakes
195 W. Nine Mile Rd., Suite 106, Ferndale, MI 48220 .. 810-553-3586

NATIONAL SERVICE / SOCIAL / POLITICAL

P-FLAG: Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
1012 14th St. NW, Ste. 700, Washington, DC 20005 202-638-4200
GLAAD: Gay/Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation
80 Varick St., #3E, New York, NY 10013 212-807-1700
..... Fax: 212-807-1806
email glaadnatl@aol.com
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force 202-332-6483
2320 17th St., NW, Washington, DC 20009 Fax: 202-332-0207
Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund
666 Broadway, New York, NY 10012 212-995-8585
ACLU Lesbian/Gay Rights Project
1370 Mission St., San Francisco, CA 94130 415-621-0674
HRC: Human Rights Campaign (National Coming Out Day)
1012 14th St. NS #607, Washington, DC 20005 202-628-4160
..... Fax: 202-347-5323
email www@hrcusa.org
Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, Political Action Committee
1012 14th St. NW #707, Washington, DC 20005 202-842-7679

LOCAL SPIRITUAL:

Rev. Geraldine Colvin & Rev. David Florence
Unity Church, 3600 Five Mile, Traverse City 616-932-9587
Rev. Emmy Lou Belcher
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Grand Traverse
6726 Center Rd., Traverse City—Home: 938-9078 ... Office: 947-3117
Rev. Nancy Hayward, Circle of the Sacred Earth 616-223-7999

LOCAL COUNSELING:

Third Level Crisis Intervention, 902 W. Front St. 616-922-4800
..... and 800-442-7315
Women's Resource Center 616-941-1210
Rodger Landvoy, PHD 616-929-1711
Susan Breuer PHD (Frankfort / Traverse City) 616-352-4261
Margo Million, ACSW 616-947-0511
David Blisk (Maple City) 616-228-5105
Joanna T. Lauber, MA, OTR, CHT 616-947-8842
Barbara Jones Smith, PHD 616-947-1444
Elizabeth Most, MSW, ACSW (Petoskey) 616-348-2415
William D. Gould, MA (Gladwin) 517-426-2351
David Rushlow, ACSW, Munson Medical Center 616-935-6385
Bay Area Counseling (Petoskey/Harbor Springs)
Margalo Bley, MSW, ACSW 616-348-3616
Daniel C. Doran, PHD, CSW 906-495-5061
Lois Martindale, Ph.D., Benzonia 616-882-5888
CDRS (a free substance abuse referral agency)
808-A S. Garfield, Traverse City 929-1315 or 800-686-0749

LOCAL SERVICE / SOCIAL / POLITICAL

Friends North (information line) 616-946-1804
Windfire Gay & Lesbian Youth Support Group—
Call Third Level for location & time 616-922-4800
or 800-442-7315
Side Traxx Nite Club, 520 Franklin St. off of 8th St. 616-935-1666
Traverse City Human Rights Commission, 400 Boardman . 616-922-4700
Gay Alcoholics Anonymous,
Grace Church, Washington at Boardman, TC John 616-922-0746
P-FLAG, Traverse City
POB 1705, Acme, MI 49610 Cindy 616-271-5045
GLSTN (Gay/Lesbian/Straight Teachers Network) 616-943-8800
NOW (National Organization for Women) Gail Trill 616-938-1333

LOCAL HIV/AIDS HEALTH COUNSELING:

Wellness Networks, Grand Traverse,
P.O. Box 1632, Traverse City, MI 49685 616-947-1110
Wellness HIV Support Group and
Family and Significant Other Support Group 616-947-1110
Grand Traverse County Health Department 616-922-4831
(anonymous HIV Testing Center)
Mary Dillinger, RN, Clinical Nurse Specialist 616-935-8140
Munson Medical Center HIV Clinic 1-800-847-8474
Community Health Clinic 616-929-4448
(anonymous counseling/testing; same-day results no fee)
H.A.N.D.S. (HIV/AIDS Support: Petoskey) 1-800-248-6777

HERE ARE SOME PHONE NUMBERS EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE:

The White House (202) 456-1111; the U.S. Capital (202) 224-3121;
and some phone numbers for Northwest Michigan Residents—Carl Levin (202)
224-6221 or in TC (616) 947-9569; Spencer Abraham (202) 224-4822 or in Grand
Rapids (616) 456-2592; Bart Stupak (202) 225-4735 or in TC 929-4711

NORTHERN MICHIGAN WOMYN'S CHOIR... WE RECRUIT!

The Northern Michigan Womyn's Choir has been working hard for over two years and having a lot of fun too! We have between 12-16 members and have performed more than 20 times for Friends North, Out 'n About, Women's events, World AIDS Day, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, benefit concerts for SAS, and other special events such as the Remember My Names Memorial in Lansing and the Scottville NAMES Project Quilt Display. The Northern Michigan Womyn's Choir is a member of Sister Singer's Network and GALA (Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses) and continues to improve and expand our repertoire. We are looking for womyn who would like to sing with us. You do not have to read music or have had experience. An interest in womyn's music and a desire to have fun are the main requirements!

The Northern Michigan Womyn's Choir sings together as a community of womyn, celebrating our strength and our diversity. Some of us identify as lesbian and some do not. We welcome womyn of varying musical abilities, political interests and life experiences to join with us in learning and sharing womyn's music. While the Choir is taking the summer off from rehearsals, we will be getting together to socialize, sing and plan for next year and this would be a great time to get to know us. So if you've heard us and thought 'I could do that' or 'I wish I could do that' contact Deb Medlin, Director at 616-275-5924 for information.

Contributions

FROM THE COMMUNITY

DUCK, DUCK, GOOSE... THE GAME ISN'T OVER YET!

It's been a busy May and June for all of us in the gay/lesbian community and our many friends and families who support us. In May we packed the City Commission Chambers only to hear stories about ducks and geese and how the Bible affects employment status. (I never really understood that connection.) The vote was 6-1 against adding the words "sexual orientation" to the City anti-discrimination hiring policy. I still wonder if the commissioners really understood the motion. In June we came back again with the same request, and got closer with a vote of 4-3, with Commissioners Jack Boynton and Larry Hardy changing their votes in favor of the amendment. Although we didn't

succeed in getting the policy changed, we did do a lot of EDUCATION! We appeared in the paper (even front page headlines) and on news channels more than ever before. This proposal was definitely the talk of the town. We were able to let this community know who we were and that we definitely are part of this community and plan to stay here.

The big question is are we done now? Will there be another attempt? Well, a lot of that depends on those of you reading this. There are lots of ideas floating around out there, let us know what you think! We also need to call Jack Boynton and Larry Hardy and thank them for their support. I have listed their numbers below. Also, a call to Peter Taylor who has resigned as Mayor. Peter needs to know how much we have appreciated his support throughout the years, especially this past year.

And last but not by any means least, Carol and I want to thank all of you for your support. You were FABULOUS! So many people came out to support this issue. Many of you wrote letters, made phone calls, talked to your friends and families and some of you touched all our hearts with your passionate voices at the City Commission meetings. There were also a few who tried their very best to keep Carol and I sane on a regular basis. (No easy task.) Special thanks to Jim Carruthers, Sue Schwartz, Jane Hayes, Reverend Geraldine Colvin, Cindy Robb, Paulette Parsons, Joann Ewing and Brian Bensett of Copy World, and most of all to our partners Sherry and René who listened to all the details of every meeting and issue that came up over and over again.

Remember the City Commission meets the 1st and 3rd Monday's of each month at 7:30 pm in the Governmental Center and the Human Rights Commission meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:00 pm in the same building.

Sincerely,
Carol Anderson, Pam Haley

Commissioners Numbers
Peter Taylor—942-1826
Jack Boynton—947-5944
Larry Hardy—947-7189

SPECIALIZING IN HOLISTIC APPROACHES FOR 15 YEARS

Creative Solutions through Hypnotherapy
Hypnotherapy will give you the Tools to Change your Life!

Joanna T. Lauber,
M.A., O.T.R., P.C.
Certified
Hypnotherapist

Call now for your free
phone consultation—

616-947-8842
convenient midtown
location, free parking
733 E. Eighth St., T.C.



Hypnotherapy can help in:

- relationship conflicts
- addictions
- eating disorders
- depression & anxiety
- stress management
- self esteem issues
- pain management
- women's issues
- childhood trauma
- spiritual crisis

UU COMMUNITY FORUM

ONE VIEW

Ray Rideout

I held strong negative feelings following the ACLU-sponsored Community Forum on the Traverse City Human Rights Commission's request to add "sexual orientation" to the list of traits included in the City's non-discrimination policy.

Paul Bare, of the ACLU of Northwestern Michigan, moderated the forum which was held at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on June 13. Cindy Robb, P-FLAG; Tom Dignan, Traverse City attorney; and Guy Molnar, Old Town Playhouse; spoke in support of the proposal. Rick Pardini, Grand Traverse Families in Action; LaRae Monk, Traverse City attorney; and Dave Conklin, a person with AIDS from out of state, opposed the proposal.

We have all heard such words as "pervert," "sodomite," "abomination," "promiscuous," "special rights," and "I have nothing against gays—I just hate their sick behavior." We heard these words and more again on the 13th. We also heard the Bible quoted in simplistic ways and out of context and that gays can change back to "normal" if they choose. For instance, Mr. Conklin said he gave up a "promiscuous lifestyle as a homosexual" and has married a woman after using the services of Exodus International.

My bad feelings came less from hearing lesbians, gays and transgendered people described in negative, stereotypical terms than in realizing just how great the gap is in our ability to communicate with extremists. Do these people really represent the Grand Traverse community? Where are the moderate forces in the community?

Tom, Cindy and Guy each gave eloquent statements and refused to be drawn into nonproductive encounters. However, I left that evening feeling that those who came to oppose the request of the Human Rights Commission had no desire, or ability, to hear another view. And sadly, their rigid posture and superior attitudes engendered harsh and negative statements and reactions on the part of many of us who supported the proposal.

I have talked with a few who feel that education did take place that evening. Indeed, Tom Dignan's statement regarding the

law and the meaning of the word "sodomy" made it clear to some heterosexuals in the audience that they, too, have broken Michigan law and are indeed sodomites.

Did the Forum do any good? I believe it may have and this gives me some hope that my initial negative feelings may not be realized. It felt very good to hear some young and new voices speak clearly and positively for human rights. I hope that some of those who opposed the proposal left the Forum with voices of reason and logic in their ears. While the Forum opened some of my old wounds, it has given me renewed energy and clarified some of my thinking.

I find it very rewarding that we have straight people in our community like Paulette Parsons, Tom Dignan, Cindy Robb and others who are speaking up and walking side-by-side with activist gays, lesbians, and transgendered in the search for human dignity. I know that I plan to continue to attend such events and look for other ways to bridge the tall walls of prejudice and hatred until all people are welcomed for their individual qualities and appreciated, not judged unfairly, for their diversity.

BORN-AGAIN-PAGAN-SEEKER

Richard Curtis

I am well known, to some, as being a person who "irritates people." Someone who enjoys poking people, tickling people. Stating things in such a way as to elicit a response.

During the last few meetings of the newsletter staff, we, "The Staff" ("The Staff of Life?"; "Thy Rod and Thy Staff They Comfort Me"? Tall, Erect, Vital, Members All) discussed the aging nature of our organization. In a recent survey (which was in fact a rather small sampling of the members of our group) we found nearly 60% over 40 years of age.

We, The Staff, have discussed various ways of eliciting response from the Younger Generations of Queer Folk. I for one urged that we skip the Reagan Generation. Why try to bring them in. Just write them off. They did after all bring us the institutionalized worship of Senile-Self-Serving-Hypocrites. The worship of Political Correctness—where everything must be seen in a positive light. No one is handicapped they are challenged. There are no faults only challenges. No one is to be corrected for bad behavior we all just smile and pleasantly encourage them with round about phrases hopefully turning them to a less destructive path. [FYI: that was a jab]

Just as the AMA refuses to chastise doctors who are openly and clearly killing people with harmful and deadly quack treatments. Doctors are not allowed to speak openly about other doctors. By mutual consent they remain quiet. Why? Because if one of their members is shown to be guilty they all must assume guilt?

Born-Again (continued page next page)

Sno-Trac Village Resort

THE GREAT YEAR-ROUND ESCAPE PLACE

CAMPING - CABINS & DORMITORY

- Full Facility Resort
- Nature Trails
- On Site Storage
- Hot Showers
- LP Gas Refill
- Rec Room
- Park Store



SNOWMOBILE SERVICE CENTER

- 28 Years Experience
- Open 10 to 10 Daily
- Parts, Oil & Fuel
- Indoor Storage
- Access to Trails

Many fine restaurants nearby
60 Acre spread with trout stream

Lovells Area
3576 Sno-Trac Trail
Grayling, MI 49738

☎ 517 348 9494

800 348 9490

I don't have a high regard for the medical profession. But I have sought advice on doctors from professionals, friends and acquaintances in the profession. When I mentioned one doctor here in Traverse City their response was, "Never use him." "He should be disbarred." "He's the worst in town." Three different people commenting on the same doctor. They all added "But, please, don't mention that I said this."

So am I just on a rant here, or what?

In the last issue my article was entitled "Sex, Sex, Sex." The proper reading of this title, to indicate the intended meaning, would be to make the words sound like "Tisk, Tisk, Tisk." Try it "Sex, Sex, Sex." I know that saying this word is difficult for many people. Especially for people who are uncomfortable with the concept of sex. Or people who are uncomfortable with their sexual orientation. There is, after all, power in words. Words can be used to excite people to action.

I'm good at soliciting responses from people by using words. I'm apparently not so good at conveying meaning to everyone. The point of my article was that sex (what we do in private) is the basis of the discrimination directed against us. My reference to pagan sexual attitudes ("we incorporate sexuality within our religion as a sacrament, or employ sexual symbolism in our rituals, or at least accept sex as a positive human activity. Usually all three.") In no way preaches anything as to how anyone else should use their sexuality. It merely stated the acceptance of sexuality as a positive part of life. (Not the Be-All and End-All of any life.)

I received many positive responses to this article. Various forms of "Right on!" "Good one!" from people who know me and from people I didn't know who took the time to phone me with congratulations on a "Wonderful article." Dan Miller, of Traverse City, however, took such affront at my opening jab at the Reagan Generation—my attempt to solicit a response (not an easy task with such a slow group)—that he seems, in my opinion to have missed the meaning of everything else I wrote. [See Letters page 14]

His most blinding mistake (misunderstanding?) though was completely his own. To quote Dan: "Not all Pagans use sex as a ritual, or use sexual symbolism in their rituals. I am a pagan and I use neither in my worship of Mother Earth and Father Sky." [underline my emphasis]. Dan, Mother Earth and Father Sky are quite specifically sexual symbols. The Mother has a womb that gave birth to us all, breasts to nourish us; The Father has sexual organs that fertilize the

Mother; strong, muscular arms to enfold us; his life fluids rain down on us all, giving us the "stuff of life." If you are a pagan worshipping Mother Earth, you use sexual images: enjoy them, revel in them, honor them.

Dan I am sorry that you were offended by what I said. But, lighten up. "If the shoe doesn't fit...", why spend so much energy trying to jam your foot into it. The 'Me Generation' has been characterized as uninterested, uncaring, by many more than myself, and with reason. If you take offense at the generalization—Good. You gave an impassioned speech at the City Commission meeting last month. Get out there and let the world know that there are people of your generation who aren't only self-interested. Get more of your generation to merely show up at events, even better if they can become involved with planning, or political issues.

And while I know that my jabs cause discomfort, that is not their purpose. Their purpose is to get responses, raise issues, to cause people to think. Being a member of a queer nation I have developed a thick skin. But allow me to point out that my jabs never stoop to name calling, on a personal level. I took no offense in your letter but hope that you will reread my last article and that with some distance from your original anger you will see more information there than on your first reading.

I'm feeling rather Biblical of late so here's one more quote: "Are we not our brother's keepers?" Should we not urge a higher response from those with whom we share this beautiful Mother/Father world?

Personally, I think we should place our hopes in Generation-X for fresh blood in the movement. But then, they appear to be so comfortable with their sexuality that they seem to be forgoing the labels of gay, straight, bi-, transgendered, and just getting on with it. We are talking of human rights aren't we, not just gay liberation, that's just an old phrase from the 60's, and that generation is just a bunch of burnt-out-air-heads with nothing left to offer. Aren't they? Blest be.

"A LIE KEEPS GROWING AND GROWING
UNTIL IT'S AS PLAIN AS THE NOSE ON
YOUR FACE."

HAIR FORCE ONE

801 West Front Street
Traverse City, MI 49684

For Appointment Call
941-8255

Mark Lizenby

HEAR . . . HERE!

Our listening bar takes the guess work out of buying music by allowing you to preview any selection in our inventory.

ABCD'S

A Better Compact Disc Store.

430 East Front Street / Traverse City / 946-2112

MADELEINE THOMAS ANNOUNCES CANDIDACY FOR DISTRICT JUDGE

Madeleine Thomas is a candidate for Judge of the 86th District, which covers Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties.

Ms. Thomas has been a practicing attorney in the Grand Traverse area for over 13 years. She has a general practice focusing on small business law, criminal and civil litigation. She has been the attorney for Friends North, Inc. ever since its inception, and the attorney for its predecessor, Dignity, Inc.

Approximately two years ago, Ms. Thomas was appointed as a Circuit Court Referee for Wexford and Missaukee Counties. In this capacity she judges and rules on issues concerning the children in a divorce—child support, custody, visitation, paternity, and alimony in the Circuit Court.

Ms. Thomas received her law degree at the University of Detroit/Mercy School of Law in 1983, and two undergraduate degrees from the Michigan State University/James Madison College in 1979.

Ms. Thomas' local civic involvement has been quite extensive, and her legal involvement in the community includes being the first woman president being elected to the three county local bar association as well as numerous other memberships on the state wide level.

Ms. Thomas is married to Robert Eichenlaub, a local special education instructor. They have two children, Christopher, age 14, and Caroline, age 9.

Ms. Thomas would like to bring her experience as a Circuit Court Referee, where she has judged some of the most difficult of issues—those relating to children—to the bench. She views the District Court as the "people's court" where people desire respect and fairness.

*Paid for by the Committee to Elect Thomas for Judge
Treasurer: Robert Brick*

PROFILE: CAROL LAMBERTSON

John Evans

Late one sunny afternoon I rang Carol Lambertson's doorbell at her neat house in a country development and was greeted by Kito, her cat of a year or so who, Carol advises, is bipolar! He was quite well-behaved as we toured the house, but when I got comfortable in a living room chair he sprang up and started munching on one of my fingers... no doubt he recognized a cat lover.

Carol had just been through an exciting weekend celebrating her son Nathan's graduation from high school. Currently working at Wolohan's, Nathan has been accepted at Michigan State for this fall to study journalism.

Carol's college career was interrupted. "I was going to go on in the field of psychology, but motherhood came along. I decided to spend my full time doing that, and so I didn't work.

But Carol already had her associate's degree from Lansing Community College. With those credentials she was able eventually to land a job with the Employment Security Commission here in Traverse City. She moved up here from her native home in Lansing with her then three-year-old son.

"But after nine weeks I was laid off. At that time you needed eighteen weeks of work to collect unemployment—so there I was—no job laid off from a jobless office! But I was able to stay here—found a roommate who was able to take me in with my son."

There followed a succession of temporary secretarial jobs, one of which was with Munson Medical Center.

"I really wanted to get into Munson, and after much letter writing and campaigning for myself I was able to get a full time job there. That was in 1984."

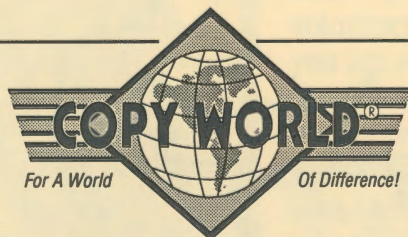
Since then Carol has worked her way up in the oncology department from department secretary to clinical research associate.

After much discussion of life at Munson over the past twelve years, I asked Carol about her social and recreational life as a working single mother over this period.

"About five years ago I really moved into a whole different area of being and that included getting involved in Unity Church and serving on their board a year or so. I became pretty active in social activities and 12-step groups."

With the support of new-found friends Carol was able to turn her life around, and this "uncovering of the layers of her life" enabled her

Carol — Continued page 24



502 E. Eighth St. • 616-947-1965
COPIES • PRINTING • SHIPPING • FAX
OPENING MARCH, 1996
Joann Ewing & Brian Bensett
A DIVISION OF LASER PERFECT PLUS, INC.



ERNIE DAWSON
OWNER

Flowers
By Josie

212 MICHIGAN AVENUE
P.O. BOX 38
GRAYLING, MICHIGAN 49738
(517) 348-4006

Flowers • Gifts • Antiques





HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN

96

BECAUSE IT'S A CRITICAL TIME FOR LESBIAN AND GAY AMERICA.

BECAUSE THIS ELECTION IS SO IMPORTANT.

BECAUSE OUR COMMUNITY MUST BE HEARD.

YOU'VE GOT THE POWER.

REGISTER.

VOTE.

HRC UNVEILS OUTVOTE '96, ITS FIRST POLITICAL CONVENTION

ALSO LAUNCHES YOUTH CAMPAIGN COLLEGE TO TRAIN TOMORROW'S MOVEMENT LEADERS

WASHINGTON—As part of its drive to make a difference in federal, state and local elections in 1996, the Human Rights Campaign will hold its first national political convention—OutVote '96—and its first Youth College for Campaign Training to equip young activists to work in political campaigns this fall.

"OutVote '96 promises to pull together major political figures, the best campaign experts in the business and HRC professionals to motivate and train HRC members," said Elizabeth Birch, HRC's executive director. "The goals include helping to elect a Congress supportive of lesbian and gay equal rights; re-lecting the first

president in history who has endorsed a lesbian or gay civil rights bill; and defeating anti-gay ballot initiatives."

About 1,000 of HRC's staunchest supporters are expected to attend the convention, from Aug. 16-18 in Chicago. They will learn essential campaign skills, become educated about HRC's slate of candidates and get prepared to return home and make a difference in local, state and national elections. HRC chose Chicago because it is the heartland of America, located in a must-win state for the presidential election.

During the week leading up to OutVote '96, the Youth College will train 26 young people to provide a boost to campaigns across the country and work for the defeat of anti-gay initiatives and the election of a fair-minded Congress. "After the elections, these young leaders will continue to provide vision and energy in the fight for lesbian, gay and bisexual equal rights for years to come," Birch said.

Amanda Bearse, Chastity Bono, Sean Sasser, Greg Ginn, Candace Gingrich, Mitchell Anderson and Dan Butler



P.O. Box 1396 Washington, D.C. 20013 (202) 628-4160 <http://www.hrcusa.org>

AMANDA BEARSE, CHASTITY BONO, SEAN SASSER, GREG GINN, CANDACE GINGRICH, MITCHELL ANDERSON AND DAN BUTLER PHOTOGRAPHED BY DON FLOOD. © 1996 HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

ON THE WEEKEND OF OCTOBER 11-13

NOT ALL BATTLES ARE FOUGHT WITH A SWORD.

OCTOBER
11-13, 1996

AIDS MEMORIAL
QUILT DISPLAY

WASHINGTON
DC

NAMES Project:
415-882-5500

Travel Info:
800-926-2631



THE NAMES
PROJECT


UNITED
AIRLINES
Official airline

hundreds of thousands of people will converge on one nation's capital to participate in the largest AIDS awareness event in history. Just weeks before the presidential and congressional elections, and NAMES Project has planned a full weekend of activities designed to ensure that AIDS is made a top priority on our nation's agenda.

As 45,000 AIDS Memorial Quilt panels—15 city blocks of fabric—are unfolded, the names of the dead will ring out over the open expanse of the National Mall. Over the course of the weekend, volunteers will read more than 70,000 names from the Quilt, more names than appear on the nearby Vietnam War Memorial.

This monumental event will be the combined efforts of over 10,000 volunteers. Whether you are an experienced NAMES Project volunteer, or someone who has only seen the Quilt on television, we need you. Please join us for this event. Together we can make a difference.

OH MY! I'M BI.

Oh my!
I'm bi.
I don't know if I,
Should lie,
And cry,
Afraid of good-bye?!
Oh why
Am I
Bi?

Choosing one,
Doesn't make the feelings for the other
Go away.
I struggle everyday.
I chose my best friend,
Together 'till the end.
Helps me through it all,
Especially when I fall.
Sometimes I wish I didn't have to choose.
A bit of me I feel I lose.
But being in a relationship with two
May not leave much time for you.

© 1995 Pamela



S H A M A N I S M

Shamanism is the most ancient method of mind-body healing. Shamans the world over saw illness as a break in our spiritual essence causing debilitation and disease.

Trauma or negative energy from another person causes spiritual break resulting in loss of power, soul loss or spirit intrusion.



Symptom of power loss are chronic bad luck, illness, frequent accidents or low self esteem.

Symptom of soul loss are empty feelings, depression, loss of vitality, gaps in memory and long grieving periods.

When we are dispirited, who helps us? We have doctors for the body and mind. As a practicing shaman, Nancy Hayward uses techniques from the ancient ones. She journeys to other worlds and with spirit help restores personal power, knowledge, healing and wholeness to her clients.

Nancy has her training from the Foundation for Shamanic Studies. For information or for an appointment call her at 616-223-7999.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADOPT-A-ROAD CLEANUP scheduled for 1996. The dates to clean Friends North's section of M-72 near Acme are: July 18, September 26. Again, we will gather at the theatre in Acme at 5:30 pm. Call Alec at 943-4492 (issue 4)

GAY GAMES IN 1998: Team Great Lakes is organizing for the upcoming games in Amsterdam, scheduled for August 1-5, 1998. Those interested, please call Ann Heler at 810-547-4692. Team Great Lakes sent 180 individual athletes and teams to New York City in '94. (Issue 4)

BI-MONTHLY, BI-SEXUAL, WOMEN'S LUNCHEON: Meet the first and third Tuesday of each month, from 11:30 am until 1:00 pm at a local, Traverse City restaurant. Call Pamela at 922-0734 or contact Friends North. (issue 4)

WASHINGTON D.C. QUILT: I am putting together a group of people who are interested in going to Washington in October to see the entire Names Project Quilt. Please contact me, Tom, at 616-947-4647 or write: 208 Circle Dr., Apt. C, Traverse City, 49684. (issue 4)

PLEASE SPONSOR OUR POSTCARD PROJECT: They do make a difference! The cost for printing the 2800 postcards is \$100.00. To contribute specifically to the Postcard Project, please call Richard at 271-3042 or send a check (in an amount of \$100.00 or less) directly to Friends North. (issue 6)

QUESTIONS ABOUT HIV AND AIDS? Call locally 24 hours a day to 947-1110. This program is sponsored by the HIV/AIDS Wellness Networks Grand Traverse Area and is staffed by Third Level Crisis Center volunteers. (Issue 6)

THE 1993 MARCH ON WASHINGTON DREW 1,000,000 PEOPLE for Gay and Lesbian rights. The producers who made a video have waived their copyrights for noncommercial TV. Those who live in areas where residents can SPONSOR a video to be on community access TV, please contact Rick, 508 Benjamin, Ann Arbor, MI 48104; 313-663-0001 (issue 4)

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF PETOSKEY is meeting at the Concord Academy, 2230 East Mitchell St. Services will be held on alternate Sundays with dates disclosed in their newsletter, Diversity. Please call 348-3117 for details or write to us at POB 271, Petoskey, MI 49770-0271 (Issue 6)

HATE CRIMES WATCH: The Triangle Foundation of Michigan has begun a VICTIMS' PROGRAM COMMUNITY WATCH COALITION. The group will collect hate-crime information from Lesbian and Gay victims of such crimes. For details, call 313-533-1166 or 517-753-9823. Report Hate Crimes! Stop the Violence! (issue 5)

CREATING CHANGE: The annual NGLTF Conference is being held in Alexandria, VA, outside of Washington D.C., on November 6-10. For information contact NGLTF through their web page or call 617-492-6393. (issue 4)

I build my practice. Please call me at 313-996-1603 or leave a message at 616-228-6780 (issue 4)

GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT: Their Reproductive Health Clinic is open to women and men of all ages. Confidential services provided are physical exams, HIV counseling and testing, pregnancy testing, sexual transmitted disease testing and treatment, all methods of birth control available, FREE Norplants, Depo-Provera, IUDs, and Condoms. For more info about these and other methods which are charged on a sliding fee scale, call 922-4630. Services are by appointment only. (issue 5)

CHRISTIAN, LESBIAN, WOMAN committed to Jesus Christ offers bible study with fellowship and fun for like-minded gays and lesbians. If you are interested, please send information on how to contact you. Please write: Bible Study, PO Box 188, Suttons Bay, MI 49682. Confidentiality assured. Let's get together and celebrate the fact that Jesus loves us just the way we are! (issue 4)

GROUPS:

FRIENDS NORTH BOARD AND MEMBER MEETINGS: The Friends North Board meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm at Northwestern Michigan College, West Hall on the first floor, Room 2 in the cafeteria. Everyone is welcome! (issue 5)

GLSTN: The Gay-Lesbian-Straight Teachers Network is meeting monthly in Traverse City. Newly forming, they welcome all interested educators. For more information, call M'Lynn at 943-8800. (issue 3)

P-FLAG: (Parents, Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays.) This is a network of parents, friends, and families of lesbians and gays who meet monthly to offer information, support, and a place to talk with others about the issues concerning them. Gays and Lesbians are also welcome and encouraged to attend P-FLAG meetings. Meet at Grace Episcopal Church in Traverse City every third Wednesday of the month, at 7:30 pm. For more information call Cindy Robb at 271-5045 (Issue 5)

WINDFIRE: This is a local youth support group for teens and others under the age of 25, which meets on a weekly basis in an atmosphere that is comfortable and friendly. Please contact Third Level at 922-4800 or 1-800-442-7315 for location, date and time. (issue 5)

OUT 'N ABOUT is a lesbian coffeehouse featuring entertainment as well as a chance to meet others from the area. It all happens at the Unity Church, 3600 Five Mile Rd. in T.C. Please see the Out 'n About article elsewhere in this newsletter for times and specific activities. (issue 4)

TRAVERSE CITY FRONTRUNNERS: If you are interested in running, call Paul or Jim at 271-4510 and leave your name, number, and that you are interested in Frontrunners. We will return your call with information on where to meet. All ages and abilities are welcome. (issue 4)

WELLNESS NETWORKS SUPPORT GROUP is for people with HIV or AIDS and they welcome you to attend. Please drop in Monday evenings from 6:00 to 7:30 pm at the Grace Episcopal Church library at 341 Washington in Traverse City. Every fourth Monday of the month the Significant-Other Support Group will be meeting at 3301 Veterans Drive, Suite 221, just north of S. Airport Road. For further information, please call 933-0279. (issue 6)

PERSONALS:

CHIROPRACTOR NEW TO TOWN: (and her two cats) need place to live. Also need office space. Also looking for part time work while

THE PETOSKEY GROUP: A social group for lesbian, gay and bisexual persons is meeting weekly in Petoskey. The group meets at 7 pm Thursdays at the Park Garden Cafe on Lake Street. For information please contact Tim at 616-348-8151 (issue 4)

NORTHERN MICHIGAN WOMYN'S CHOIR is always looking for new voices. To obtain more information or for a performance schedule, please contact Deb at 275-5924. (issue 4)

H.A.N.D.S is an HIV/AIDS Network located in Petoskey. They are currently seeking volunteers in the northern lower peninsula and eastern upper peninsula of Michigan. HANDS is a non-profit organization that has committed itself to helping and supporting the needs of HIV infected persons. They offer a number of services, including support groups, education, public awareness, and one-on-one friendship support. Volunteers are urgently needed in the Alpena, Gaylord, and Rogers City areas. If you would be interested in the program, please call 616-526-9213. (issue 4)

GAY ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: Meetings for gays and lesbians are held each Saturday at 11:00 am and have been moved to a new location at Grace Episcopal Church, corner Washington and Boardman Streets in TC. For further info, call John at 922-0746 or Tom at 947-4647. (issue 4)

FRIENDS LIKE US: A social group in north east lower Michigan for gay, lesbian, and bisexual people. Meets monthly. For info, please contact Jeff @ 517-354-7702, or write to him at POB 391, Alpena, MI 49707. (issue 4)

LETTERS

Dear Friends;

I figure that if I want to keep up on the latest from home I can find out in your newsletter. My brother who lives in Williamsburg started it for me a couple years ago. So out of 4 brothers and 5 sisters I have a brother and sister that accept as I am.

Living in a Military Retirement Community is a lot like being in the service but no longer can they discriminate against me. I am considered a Resident of Washington, D.C. and under their laws. I like to put the newsletter in the library and watch all the bigots get mad and saying it shouldn't be there.

I used to get the *Washington Blade* but it wasn't as good as yours is. My heart is still in Williamsburg even if I haven't been back in 6 years. Too much dissension from some of the relatives makes it hard to go back and visit. I may get strong enough to fight them for my right to live also someday but so far I am still running. I have met many people here who are gay and most of the straight(?) people who live around me accept me. So I have a closer family here than at home.

Being in the service for 20 years and not knowing where I was coming from before that has made my life lonely. That is why I like to see people like you all working for the children coming up. Too many children kill themselves because they are lost and no one to talk to. The

so called religious bigots who wish to push their warped ideas on all really make me mad. What happened to tolerance in their religious beliefs? Jews, Christians, and Muslims have killed more people in the name of their god than any other people.

I was brought up Catholic but changed to Buddhism because they accepted me as I am. I spent over 5 years in Thailand while in the service. I went to the monastery for 3 months as all monks do and found that their non-violent life was the best way to go. That was the only time that I was able to live my own life so did have a taste of what life can be. Since 1975 it has been back to being alone and scared again. So teach the children that love encompasses all of us and not just a select few.

Thank you,
Pat and Ted



Dear F/N/TC

We have a dear and close friend in the TC area and have known her for quite a long time, and we want to address a serious problem that exists in this area's gay community as well as many others. We're not quite sure, but it could be just a hand full of people who can't find something better to do in their lives, but make trouble, spread rumors and gossip. People! Get a Life!!

Why do they feel the need to intrude into someone else's private and personal life. Maybe reasons of insecurity, jealousy, nosiness, no life?

And then with no apparent concern about another person's life and reputation, try their damndest to destroy a person's livelihood, reputation and life, with the flash of a double edge tongue! Vicious lies, rumor, and jealous are wasted emotions. So why?—do they do this to someone they barely know? Some kind of thrill, high, kicks? (How sick!)

Think if someone reversed this and did the same to you and your family and personal life. How would you like that? So many people are quick to judge someone so fast to pass judgment without knowing any or all of the true facts. Why does this vicious "Gossip Mill" exist. Is it helping us reverse to the hate in the world. (Gay People) is it helping us fight against discrimination in housing, marriage, equal rights? Shouldn't you be using this wasted energy for these needed! Much needed positive things to become reality for us!! We're all Americans, yet, we don't have the same rights as straight America. Use your energies to fight those causes, not each other!!

If we as gay America can't even get along with each other! Well that just gives fuel to the Newts of the world, the Extreme Right, Fanatics! it

LETTERS continued next page



Open Monday-Saturday - 6:00 pm — Sunday at 2:00 pm
616 ▾ 935 ▾ 1666 ▾ 520 Franklin ▾ Traverse City, MI 49684
Proudly Gay Owned and Operated since 1989

took many of us half a life time to come out, and finally feel the freedom of that. Don't let a handful of very disturbed people take that away from any of us! I'm sure these few people I'm talking about know who they are!! Before it's too late we need to build not destroy! Don't bring other peoples lives down into your self-destructive decline! I hate to say this but this is not the first time we have had a friend singled out for this type of behavior in the TC Northern Michigan area and the stories are well traveled about this type of thing going on, so Listen-Up TC a lot of our friends have moved elsewhere, and a couple more are planning it too. I wonder why? — and people wonder why no-one shows up at our community events or doesn't travel in from rural places. That's why. The stories on peoples behavior have circulated far and wide.

So—before you're so quick to judge, try, convict, someone! You think you know but really don't!! Stop and think?

Do I know the person, at all? Do I know the facts? The truth? The circumstances in their life? Even if you think you do, more times than not you don't!

So mind your own life and business

"Peace"

Cameron & Deb

Ann Arbor, Michigan

P.S. We don't know if you'll print this, but all of us down-state with friends up there sure hope so! Thanks.



Letter to the Editor:

Shafted By The President... Again!

I am a gay man, an active member in our community and a white collar professional. I remember when Mr. Clinton was politicking to be President of the United States and needed my gay vote. He pledged he would work for me. He gave me cause for hope. At long last I would no longer be a voice crying in the wilderness. Mr. Clinton vowed to be my man in Washington. I voted for him because I naively believed he was not taking me for a ride. Gosh, he sounded so genuinely sincere, he made me feel good about being gay, he told me he believed in the causes of my gay and lesbian family. I earnestly hoped that with Clinton in the White House things would be different for me and my oppressed family. Out of the closet into the light! Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty I would be free at last. What an energizing feeling! I

would be treated as an equal, I would be welcomed into the military, I would have the top executive of the USA stand by me and assure me that he too believed in my right to marry the person of my choosing.

Reality has set in for me. I got shafted yet one more time. Like so many before him, I was being courted not because of who I am as a gay man, but solely because I had something he wanted and needed... my vote. I gave it to him and I feel like a prostitute! Used again, lied to again, lifted up only to be hurled down. That is until I can be sweet talked into putting out just one more time. Well, the race is on. I refuse to be used and abused by those who promise me the world and throw me crumbs.

President Clinton says: Join the military as a gay person... just don't get caught. On same sex marriages, he opted: Oh, no I certainly don't agree with same-sex marriages. Oh, how awful. You dirty homosexuals wanting to live together as husband and wife. Even my cat, Socks, knows better. On, equal rights for gays, not in my life time. Well, the list goes on and on and on.

The bottom line is that President Clinton is saying to all gays and lesbians: "You, just don't understand. I have to think of my political career. Right now I have to go after the Catholic Vote, the Billy Graham vote. Sorry, you are not a priority this time around." Were we ever? Yes, I know the rhetoric, the ploy to again get the gay vote: They say look at the other option, Mr. Dole. Well, I have and he will get my undivided support and vote come November. I urge all gays and lesbians to have the integrity to give Mr. Dole a fair hearing. Mr. Clinton took us for a ride, lied to us, played up to us and stiffed us royally. Only a fool would be naive enough to put back into office someone who hurled such abuse on our gay family. Will we ever learn?

Anonymous

Editor, I am unable for professional reasons to print my name. I subscribe to and am an avid reader of our magazine. I hope you have the courage to print my letter in its entirety.



To the "Bom-again-Pagan-Seeker"

Generalization is something that hurts homosexuals today more than anything else. We are generalized as sex-addicts, perverts, pedophiles, etc. Which is why it is so disturbing that a member of our community generalizes such a large portion of us so carelessly and arrogantly. As a child of the "Reagon Era," I was very insulted by your arrogant generalization of my generation. No one who knows me would ever accuse me of being "unopinionated" or of looking to someone else for all the answers. There are many like me out there, just as there are many like you have described. It is the easy and lazy way, to make such broad statements. I could just as easily say that the children of the 60's sold out or wasted their minds and bodies from experimentation. However this is not 100% true, but for many it is.

Speaking of experimentation, it was not a 60's fad. It is something every generation, to some degree or another, experiences. Almost every teenager has pushed the limits to some extent. My generation, was like all others in that respect.

Not all Pagans use sex as a ritual, or use sexual symbolism in their rituals. I am a pagan and I use neither in my worship of Mother Earth

Letters continued next page

JenLees

custom screen printing

516 E. Eighth St.

Traverse City, MI 49686

(616)929-3610 FAX 929-9206

- > SCREEN PRINTING
- > WHOLESALE/RETAIL
- > CUSTOM LETTERING
- > GRAPHICS & DESIGN
- > PHOTO T-SHIRTS
- > EMBROIDERY

TOLERANCE

LET'S MAKE IT A BETTER WORLD



T-SHIRT AVAILBLE HERE
100% NATURAL COTTON
ONLY 12.95

FRIENDS NORTH



DATES: October 25-27, 1995

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: September 24, 1996

CHECK-IN: After 4:00 pm

CHECK-OUT: Before Noon

DEPOSIT: A \$50.00 per hotel room deposit is required to confirm your reservations. Cancellations must be received at least 14 days prior to arrival. With 14 days notice of cancellation, a refund, less \$10.00 processing fee, will be issued. Deposits are non-refundable with less than 14 day notice of cancellation.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Hotel rooms have either two double beds, queen size bed and double sofa bed, or a king-size bed. All hotel rooms have a full bath, Spectra-Vision, satellite TV, and telephone with voice mail. Your choice of accommodations are subject to availability.

RATES: \$52.00 plus tax (6%) per room per night, single or double occupancy

RATES INCLUDE: Lodging Only.

EARLY ARRIVAL/LATE DEPARTURE RATES: Same as above.

RESERVATIONS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED BY TELEPHONE; PLEASE USE THE FORM BELOW. CONFIRMATION WILL BE SENT UPON RECEIPT OF THIS FORM AND DEPOSIT.

FRIENDS NORTH

NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

PHONE _____ # OF ADULTS & CHILDREN _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____

ACCOMMODATIONS _____ Hotel Room

ROOMING _____ WITH _____

_____ CHECK ENCLOSED CHARGE MY CREDIT CARD: AMEX MC VISA DISCOVER

CARD # _____ EXP. DATE _____

I AUTHORIZE THE ABOVE CHARGE TO MY CREDIT CARD _____ (Signature)

DETACH AND RETURN WITH DEPOSIT TO: SUGAR LOAF RESORT
RESERVATIONS DEPARTMENT
4500 SUGAR LOAF MTN. ROAD
CEDAR, MI 49621-9755



 *Madeleine*
THOMAS
for DISTRICT JUDGE

Paid for by The Committee to Elect Thomas for Judge • Treasurer: Robert Brick
520 S. Union • P.O. Box 2007 • Traverse City, MI 49685 • 616-947-2217

- Practicing attorney for 13 years
- Circuit Court Referee, Wexford & Missaukee Counties for two years —
 - Judging and deciding child custody, visitation, support, and other matters involving children in divorce
- FRIENDS NORTH, INC.'s corporate attorney since its inception
- Past President of Grand Traverse-Leelanau-Antrim County Bar Association
- RESPECT —

“I want to encourage respect for and from the legal system... to victims, criminal defendants, police officer, court personnel, the judge... all deserve respect.”

“I want people to respect our legal process and to do that, the process must respect them.”

- **VOTE** on Tuesday, August 6, 1996. Your vote will make a difference. Absentee ballots are available through your local Township Clerk.

and Father Sky. Sex is a special, joyous communication between my partner and myself. It is sacred because it is respectful and responsible. I don't really care how many words the Greeks had for love, this is not important. I love my partner, which means I trust him, respect him, cherish the time we have together, share my life, my soul, my secrets, my goals, my mistakes, my joys and my pain with him as he does with me. He is my friend, my confidant and at times my critic. Sex is not what it is all about. It is about seeing each other as we look in the morning—and still knowing that this is who I want to spend my life with. It is about seeing the whole person, the real person. That is what it is about.

I did not come out because of sex. I can have all the sex I want (gay sex) and never come out. My coming out was about honesty, integrity and happiness. Sex I could have, but without honesty and integrity, without being true to oneself, that sex is full of shame, degradation, and self-loathing. I came out to have a healthy (mentally and physically) life with or without sex. Sex is not the begin all end all. It is only a part of who I am. I do not need sex to feel like a homosexual. I feel like a Homosexual when I walk down the street, when I eat, when I shop, when I sleep, when I wake up, when I go to the bathroom, in short I feel like a Homosexual 24 hours a day.

Being proud of who we are means being proud of all that we are, we are sexual beings—and many other things as well. We are probably the most diverse community in the world. But when one generalizes one part of our community and insists that sex is all we are about, it smacks of Homophobia not of pride.

Dan Miller
Traverse City, Michigan



Dear Ms. Reynolds,

I am writing in response to your editorial (enclosed) in the March 19th Traverse City Record Eagle. I to was very encouraged by the support given to the Gaynor family with the recent cross burning incident. Personally and as a member of the Traverse City Human Rights Commission I also had the chance to speak out about this horrible incident. The thing that concerns me is that while I spoke, and as I try to end another type of discrimination, occurring in this country and area, I can't but wonder how supportive the community would have been if this had been a gay or lesbian family. These people, still to this day, face discrimination and hate crimes every day of their lives,



with no protection from our government or laws. It is a fear they live with everyday. If someone finds out they can lose their jobs, homes, children with no recourse.

Ms. Reynolds, I hope as a representative of the Civil Rights Commission that when you are presenting your report from the Bias Crime Response Task Force to Governor Engler you will include that providing support for victims of all bias crimes will include gay/lesbian citizens of this state.

Sincerely yours,
Pam J. Haley

Dear Ms. Haley:

Your recent letter to the Michigan Department of Civil Rights director, Nanette Lee Reynolds was referred to me for response. I am pleased to inform you that The Bias Crime Response Task Force will be submitting a report to the Michigan Civil Rights Commission in May. Subsequently, the report will be forwarded to the governor. The task force report, as submitted, does provide support for all victims of bias crimes, including gay and lesbian citizens of this state.

The task force established three standing committees: *community response; data collection and trend analysis; and victim support*. These three standing committees prepared a very comprehensive plan of action with recommendations that address issues of hate-bias incidents. In addition, these standing committees jointly prepared a cooperative agreement that would establish a working relationship between local communities and the Department of Civil Rights.

In response to this task force report, an invitation will be extended to the Traverse City Human Relations Commission, and other human relations commissions from across the state, to be an active partner, with this department, in combating hate/bias incidents within Michigan communities.

It takes a great deal of courage to speak out on an issue of such controversy. I look forward to working with the people of Traverse City in an ongoing effort to develop a state wide network to combat hate/bias crimes and incidents.

I speak for Dr. Nan Reynolds in reiterating that the department staff continues to be available as a resource to participate in related community activities, and to lend our support and technical assistance in ways that will be helpful.

Best regards,
Cathy Milett, Coordinator



Senator George McManus
Capitol Building
Lansing, MI 48913

Dear Senator McManus,

My Scottish grandmother used to refer to the Irish as if they were something of a subhuman race. As a kid, I mentioned it to a German friend, and we both had a big laugh. It made no sense. To us, it seemed so silly. Going a step further, he relayed how his mother used to refer to the Italians as being, "not quite white." We had a big chuckle on that one, as well. Boy were they ever dumb, we thought.

Letters continued next page

Isn't it nice how often time can heal the wounds of the past? What is deadly for one generation, can seem completely ludicrous to the next. The bible belt had its share of problems giving up slavery. Who would have believed that racial equality would become the law of the land? After all, didn't they used to say that blacks were like animals? One thing that can't be argued is the clearly subservient role that the bible defines for women. I'll let you be the one to remind them of this.

Each generation has to deal with its own bigotry. Time that could be used to do good, is instead wasted on hatred. Although we may be more selective, we differ from the Serbs/Bosnians and all, primarily by our choice of weaponry.

Every opportunity that I've had, I have voted for you. Johnson Oil gave me one of your signs, and I proudly placed it on my "almost on the interchange" lawn. Dr. David Darby has often told me about your effectiveness at getting things done in Lansing, and your willingness to listen. The boost that you have given horse racing has saved the sport, and all the jobs that go with it. I couldn't have been happier with the job that you've been doing. But... on the discriminatory anti-gay bill that penalizes universities who pay benefits to same sex couples... you really blew it!

Gay bashing is usually justified by three nonsensical arguments. The first is choice.

"Don't they choose to be gay?" Only an idiot would choose to shock his friends, horrify his parents, get legally fired from his job, and risk physical assault from macho-bullies acting in the name of God. Then, if it goes before a judge, he's apt to think, oh well, it was wrong, but it was just a fag. Did you choose to be heterosexual? Could you have chosen to be gay instead? Imagine what it must be like as a child to be called a fag, queer, limp wrist, etc. Can you imagine how horrible that must feel? No wonder that approximately 40% of teen suicides are homosexual kids escaping from the anguish of a tormenting world. What child would choose to be "a fairy"? Would a caring, loving, sensitive God want us to react this way to one of his creations?

It's always amazing to me how individuals can take an inclusive book of love, kindness, and tolerance, and turn it into an exclusive, vindictive book of hatred. Hope that you're not reading this on a

Sunday as the bible prescribes death for that offense. Forget to shave this morning? Good, you've overcome the sin of shaving. Remember now, no shellfish, rabbit or pork. Strong drink? Forget that too. You **have** paid cash for your house and cars? Also, you might mention to the Governor and any of your divorced and re-married friends, that the bible considers that to be adultery.

This Sunday, I'll be rollerski training to prepare for next ski season. I'll do about 26 km (16 miles). Would you like to join us? It's my normal, natural routine on Sunday. I just love it, although I'm sure that it's not natural for most people. What is natural and where do we draw the line? Do we draw a line at all? Some of us even appear to enjoy golf! We humans are such a wonderfully diverse lot. It makes us what we are, with the whole, being greater than the sum of the parts. But diversity is not just limited to humans, every species of mammals has homosexuals within its ranks. Do we respond by saying, "how awful," or, do we embrace and accept their contributions.

You have been presented with a wonderful opportunity to move this generation a step away from the bigotry and hate of the past. A chance to start healing the wounds. Will we be the subject of our grandchildren's ridicule, or will we be remembered as leaders doing our best to relieve the suffering and injustice inflicted by the past? The Germans are still apologizing to the Jews. Will the next generation be forced to apologize for us? It's not just the support of lesbians and gays that you'll gain, but also, the respect and the admiration of anyone with a kind heart and a tolerant attitude. Let the bigots go, you don't need them. Please re-consider your support of this homophobic, discriminatory piece of legislation. It's unworthy of a leader like you.

Look into the faces of those seething proponents of hate, if you have any remaining doubt. Is that where you want to be aligned. There is a fundamental choice for all of us. Why not choose love, caring, and concern in the place of hatred and bigotry?

Sincerely yours,
David R. Forbush, D.V.M.

FRIENDS NORTH, INC., P.O. BOX 562, TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49685-0562

YES, I want to be a supporting member of the Friends North Organization.

Single: \$15.00 Couple: \$25.00 (includes one-year newsletter subscription) _____

I am enclosing an additional: 10.00 20.00 40.00 _____

and I would like to see this used for: Newsletter Where needed Community Needs

Optional First Class Mailing \$8.00) _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

I would like to continue receiving the newsletter but am unable to contribute

I am New to the mailing list I am already on mailing list Note my new address Please remove me from your mailing list

THE F/N MAILING LIST IS CONFIDENTIAL AND OUR MAILINGS COME IN AN UNMARKED ENVELOPE.

WORDS AND MUSIC: A LOCAL GUIDE TO BOOKS AND MAGS, TAPES & CD'S

By Rick Gould

Here are some suggestions by our local book and music stores for any lulls in your exciting summer!

At the **Bookie Joint**, Shelley gave us this list:

Books:

Casselli's Queer Quizbook by David Pollard, \$4.95. Brain-teasers and not-so-trivial pursuits of gay heritage.

The Ultimate Guide to Lesbian and Gay Film and Video, edited by Jenni Olson. Info on more than 2,000 works of film. \$25.00.

Music:

Intimacy, Bruce Roberts. Roberts has written hits for Streisand and many others. Hear, Elton John, James Ingram, Luther Vandross, and k.d. lang sing along. Cassette: \$10.98, CD: \$16.98.

Global Divas is a panoramic collection of women vocalists from around the world. 30 nations and 41 selections represent this theme. Included: Piaf, Aretha, Varttina, Patsy Cline and more. Cassette: \$9.98; CD: \$15.98.

Passionflower, Fred Hersch. A brilliant, gay jazz pianist has crafted an exquisite album. Cassette: \$10.98; CD: \$16.98.

At **AB CD's**, Norm made these recommendations:

Duncan Sheik. This debut CD on Atlantic is one of the best in a long time. Norm is getting everyone hooked on Duncan and I am his latest disciple. Romantic and introspective, he's currently touring with labelmate and Interlochen Alum, Jewel, who's own debut CD isn't so bad, either.

Dilate, Ani DiFranco. Righteous Babe herself delivers another exceptional collection of cutting edge tunes. Notable cut: Shameless. Mention you read it here and get *Dilated* for \$13.99, for a limited time, while current inventory lasts.

All For You, Diane Krall. A jazz tribute to Nat King Cole has become a surprise hit.

Mission Impossible Soundtrack. Odd, 10 of the cuts on this album are not in the film. Sorta like "Kiss From A Rose" in "Batman Forever"! Oh, well. Massive Attack, Bjork, Skunk Anansie and Longpigs contributes as well as the theme song, instrumental by Danny Elfman.

B. Dalton's had these suggestions:

Whitman's Men--Walt Whitman with contemporary

photographs. The Calamus poems from Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" shown at its purest and most spontaneous. The photographs accentuate the themes: the search for love; loneliness and death. \$18.95.

The Sibling Society by Robert Bly. Drawing upon a diverse assortment of poetry, myth, and current trends, Bly postulates that the traditional concepts of childhood and adulthood have been lost. Bly says that we have become a nation of one behaviour: adolescence. Greed and envy have replaced moral values and hard work. The book is intended as a wake up call to ourselves. \$25.00.

Outrage by Vincent Bugliosi. This is the famed Charles Manson prosecutor's Monday Morning quarterback look at the O.J. trial and what went wrong. I think we know that already! \$25.00.

At **Horizon Books**, Alex suggested the following:

And Say Hi To Joyce: The Life and Chronicles of a Lesbian Couple by Deb Price and Joyce Murdoch. Both are in the newspaper biz, and Deb has a column in the Detroit News. Finally out in paper. \$12.95.

Fodor's Gay Guide To The USA: The Most Comprehensive Guide for Gay and lesbian Travelers by Andrew Collins. New and in softcover: \$19.50.

A Boy named Phyllis: A Surbaban Memoir by Frank DeCaro. A switch: a gay memoir that is funny and upbeat! Frank recalls growing up different in his Italian New Jersey neighborhood in the 60s and 70s, remembering his favorite things: Elton John, disco, the Entemann's factory on the corner, the un-lived-in living room, Keith Patridge worship and so much more! \$22.95.

At **Waldenbooks**, Kevin gave us this list:

Gay Olympian: The Life and Death of Tom Waddell by Tom Waddell and Dick Schaap. This athlete did much to dispel stereotypes of masculinity and sports. He was a revelation to mainstream America when he appeared on 20/20 with his partner to talk about Waddell's AIDS diagnosis. An inspiring tribute. \$23.00.

Heaven's Coast: A Memoir by Mark Doty. This award-winning book by poet Doty is about the death of his lover from AIDS. Simple and simply unforgettable. \$23.00.

The Beauty Of Men by Andrew Holleran. The fine novelist's lead character deals with the shame of mourning his own loss of youth while others around him are dying young. This provocative tale is also a universal one. \$25.00.

These stores appreciate your business and suggestions.

DUNESWOOD

in NORTHERN MICHIGAN

a woman's resort with 12 private housekeeping rooms nestled on 7 acres of secluded woods. Also in nearby Glen Arbor,

MARGE & JOANNE'S B&B

Open all year, no pets, WOMEN ONLY.

Near Traverse City. For info: Marge & Joanne's,
PO Box 457, Glen Arbor, MI 49636
(616) 334-3346.



Cross Country Ski

FORBUSH CORNER, INC.

- Over 35 km of trails, machine set for both skating and striding from, beginner to expert.
- Just 1/4 mile east of I-75 at the Lewiston/Frederic exit (264)
- Performance ski shop, rentals and instruction
- Bunkhouse and two warming areas
- Weekend food service
- One kilometer night ski trail

Dave Forbush
(517) 348-5989

P.O. Box 327
4971 County Road 612
Frederic, Michigan 49733

IN FOCUS

PERRY WATKINS

"I served, with pride, honor and distinction, from induction to retirement. An African American, who is homosexual. I am the first to do so and there is no reason I should be the last. quite like the runner who broke the four minute mile, to improve on his effort, the successful ones studied his techniques."—Perry J. Watkins Sergeant First Class U.S. Army (Retired) in a letter to President Clinton.

by Morgan Gwenwald

Before we ever heard that phrase "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," Sgt. Perry Watkins was not only telling, he was performing regular drag acts while serving in the U.S. Army. Despite his recent death, the story of Perry Watkins and his struggle with the U.S. Government lives on as one of the most remarkable chapters in our fight for inclusion in the military.

Perry was drafted into the Army in 1968 at the height of the Vietnam war. On his official forms he checked the box "yes" in acknowledgment of his homosexual tendencies. He described his enlistment experience:

...as the examining physician held my Report of Medical History form in his hands and asked me, "What does this mean?" pointing to the block I had checked "yes." I said, "It means just what it says." He then asked, "And what is that?" With six other people present and listening, I said, "It means that I am homosexual." I made my statement with pride and dignity without shame or fear. I was immediately sent to an Army psychiatrist, who believed humiliation was part of the evaluation process. I was asked about sexual conduct, and acknowledged both oral and anal activity... I was ultimately found qualified for service and drafted in May of 1968.

Perry went on to negotiate his way of serving with pride and professionalism, being open about his sexuality to the chain of command and his fellow soldiers, and demanding the same respect and protection afforded all soldiers. He re-enlisted several times and served successfully for the next fourteen years. Within that time he also performed for the Army as "Simone," his drag persona.

Then in 1982 the Department of Defense issued a directive dictating "homosexuality incompatible with military service," and claiming it undermined discipline, good order, and morale. At this period the Army moved to expel Perry, and discharged him three years later when his enlistment expired.

Perry fought this decision with the help of the ACLU over the next several years in *Watkins v. U.S. Army*. In 1989 a federal appeals court ordered him reinstated to active duty, reasoning that if the army drafted him and repeatedly re-enlisted him knowing he was gay, then they couldn't discharge him for being gay. The Justice Department appealed the decision but the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the case and let stand the decision of the lower court. Perry thus became the first openly gay serviceman to defeat the ban against gays in the military. He settled his suit with the Army, agreeing to forgo re-entry to the military in return for back pay, honorable discharge, full retirement benefits, and a promotion to sergeant first class.

Perry's groundbreaking story was told in a 1994 documentary entitled "*Sis: The Perry Watkins Story*." Perry went on making public appearances around the country, talking about his experience in the armed forces. Nothing so clearly and irrefutably displayed the Army's hypocrisy around its gay and lesbian policy as Perry's case.

On March 17, 1996 Perry J. Watkins died of AIDS-related complications in his home in Tacoma, Washington, at age 47. He is remembered by GLAAD as a soldier who was asked and who DID tell, and served anyway; who wore his uniform and his drag outfits with equal pride. He was a courageous role model for gay men and lesbians not only in the military, but in all parts of society.

GAY TEEN APPEALS FOR HELP AT SCHOOL

* Board delays action to ban harassment

By Dan Shine, (Reprinted from the *Detroit Free Press*)

Allen Park, MI- The Allen Park School Board delayed action Monday on revising a policy that forbids, among other things, harassment of students because of sexual orientation. The issue was brought up at a May meeting when the mother of 14-year-old Joshua Winowiecki asked the board to protect her son from harassment by other students at Allen Park High School.

About two months earlier, Joshua had told a friend that he was gay. After word got out, Joshua was spit on by students, called names, had pictures of naked men tossed at him and stones thrown at him. The boy, his mom, a civil rights attorney and members of area gay and lesbian groups attended the May 13 school board meeting. They said the family would sue unless the board acted to stop the harassment.

The Allen Park situation reflects a growing trend nationwide as school districts struggle with how to protect gay and lesbian students from harassment. School board member Robert Bratten on Monday night (June 3) asked for the delay to further study the policy's proposed wording. The board will address the issue again June 10. Board members unanimously agreed, angering many attending the standing-room-only meeting held at Allen Park High School. 'Shame on you,' said Raymond Salliotte III, Joshua's attorney. 'It's a sad day in Allen Park.'

Joshua said he was disappointed by the board's action, noting that he 'still hears comments every day.' Some victims of such abuse have taken their cases to court. Patricia Logue, an attorney for Lambda Legal Defense Fund in Chicago, represents a former Wisconsin high school student. Jamie Nabozny and his parents sued the Ashland, Wis., district last year in federal court, claiming it had



not protected him from antigay harassment. Logue said gay and lesbian students 'should have a safe learning environment, regardless of what you think of that student.'

NOTE: Allen Park High School, 18401 Champaign, Allen Park, MI 48101

Triangle Foundation (Gay and Lesbian Anti-violence organization), 19641 W. 7 Mile Road, Detroit, MI 48219, 313-537-3323

L.A. GAY & LESBIAN CENTER WINS LANDMARK ASYLUM CASE FOR PERSECUTED RUSSIAN YOUTH

FIRST DECISION BY A JUDGE

GIVING SEXUAL ORIENTATION-BASED ASYLUM TO A RUSSIAN

LOS ANGELES, May 19, 1996 — A 23-year-old gay Russian man, beaten and jailed in his home country because of his sexual orientation, is now a free man living in West Hollywood, thanks to a landmark asylum case won by the Immigration Law Project of the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Community Services Center.

A native of a small town 400-miles northeast of Moscow, Sergey Fedetov was beaten, interrogated and/or jailed by police officials, and threatened by school officials, on as many as 15 occasions.

"They arrested me because they could tell I was gay and they do not think we should be alive or in Russia," said Fedetov, through an interpreter. "Although the Russian government recently repealed the law outlawing homosexuality, this has not changed the mistreatment by the police and other Russian people. If anything, the increasing anarchy in my country has made it worse."

On one occasion, Fedetov and a friend were arrested by three officers because they were "obvious homosexuals." At the police station he was thrown around, slapped in the face, and hit on the back with a "demokratiser" (rubber baton) by an interrogator who ordered him to reveal the names of other gay people. When he refused, he was jailed in a small cell with three other people for more than nine hours without food or water.

Upon his release, Fedetov was interrogated by officials at his high school, who learned he was gay from the police. The school officials threatened to have him registered as a juvenile delinquent if he did to change his behavior.

Of the six times he was taken into custody by police, only once did he avoid a severe beating. On the occasions he was not arrested, he and his friends were taunted by the authorities, who would yell insults and demand the names of other gay people. They would also make a scene, so as to let neighbors and passersby know he was gay. The harassment of gay people was too much for one of his friends, who ended his life by jumping from the ninth floor of a building.

The police also "warned" his mother of his behavior and surprised him at home once a month to intimidate him and demand information about other gay people.

This abuse of gay people was not unique to his hometown. After moving to Moscow in June, 1984, to earn enough money to flee to the United States, he was stopped and detained by police officials on at least five occasions. On

these occasions, however, the officers made it clear he could avoid a beating if he agreed to pay a bribe.

"It seemed impossible for me to hide the fact that I am gay," said Fedetov, a dark-haired, dark-eyed, clean cut youth who was also victimized because of his half-Armenian heritage and appearance. "I do not generally tell people I am gay, but they seem to be able to tell from the way I dress in certain American blue jeans and T-shirts, from the way I carry myself and from other gay friends I am often with."

"I had heard that in Los Angeles, gay people can live free from persecution. It was my dream to come to the United States, where I could live freely."

After getting an exit visa for travel to Mexico, and working months to afford a plane ticket out of the country, he flew to Mexico City in December, 1995. From there he rode to Tijuana in a bus. Before he could enter the United States at San Ysidro he was robbed of all his money.

Days later, while attempting to get to Los Angeles, he was captured by INS officials at the San Clemente checkpoint for entering without a visa and transferred to their detention facility at Terminal Island. Expecting to be deported but looking for support during his confinement, he found a phone book ad for the Gay & Lesbian Center's Youth Talkline. Counselors there, having difficulty communicating with him, referred him to a Russian Gay & Lesbian Support Group which put him in touch with the City of West Hollywood's Russian liaison, Eugene Alper.

Fedetov was unaware that persecution based on one's sexual orientation was grounds for asylum, but Alper suspected he had a good case. He quickly contacted the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center's Immigration Law Project which took the case on January 22, 1996.

According to attorney Cheryl Gertler, one of two volunteer attorneys who worked on the case, Fedetov was very reluctant to provide details about the extensive abuse he faced in Russia.

"During the course of our questioning him," said Gertler, "I was shocked and saddened to realize that Sergey had accepted as normal the beating and harassment he had endured simply because he is gay."

As compelling as Fedetov's case was, the Gay & Lesbian Center's Immigration Law Project Coordinator, Jeff Kim, and the Project's two volunteer attorneys, Gertler and John Craig, knew they were facing an uphill battle.

"Sexual orientation-based asylum is extremely difficult to attain," said Kim. "Only 36 have been granted in the entire country and never had a judge awarded asylum to a Russian on this basis. When the judge deported three people prior to Sergey's hearing, we were very nervous."

"We were successful only through the combination of Sergey's compelling account of persecution, the dedicated teamwork of extraordinary volunteer attorneys, top-notch expert testimony, and able assistance from the City of West Hollywood's Russian community liaison and the San Francisco-based International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission."

"Since I fled the country, I know that I would have faced even more severe persecution by governmental authorities if I were returned to Russia," said Fedetov. "I'm very grateful to the Gay & Lesbian Center, my attorneys, Eugene and all those who have been so kind to me. I believe they have saved my life."

Though Fedetov has his freedom now, he has little else. The Gay & Lesbian Center's Immigration Law Project is in the process of getting him a work permit, but meanwhile he is in need of basic items such as clothing,

toiletries, shoes, and money. For information on how you can help, call 213-860-7350.

The mission of the Gay & Lesbian Center's Immigration Law Project is to offer legal assistance to lesbian and gay immigrants and immigrants with HIV. Nearly 300 people were helped last year and more than 450 people are expected to be served this year.

The Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Community Services Center, with more than 240 employees and an annual budget of \$18 million, is the largest gay and lesbian organization in the world, one of the nation's leading HIV/AIDS care providers and equal rights advocates, and home to an array of free or low cost health, educational, cultural and social programs welcoming 14,000 visits from ethnically diverse youth and adults each month.

It is not necessary to talk [about being gay in Spain]. Everybody is tolerant. People are not classified with that, and you know, I absolutely refuse that classification. For that reason when someone says, 'Well you are an openly gay director,' come on. Stop. I'm a director.'

—Spanish filmmaker Pedro Almodovar

PETOSKEY GROUP

Our Hope or Goal...Is to promote unity within the Little Traverse Bay Gay Community.

The Petoskey Group is expanding, and would like your input, ideas and suggestions... The list that follows are some of our ideas...

BOWLING TEAMS... CAMPING... WOMEN'S AND MEN'S CHOIRS...
ALTERNATIVE SINGING GROUPS... GAY SUPPORT GROUPS... GAY
AA GROUPS... COOKING & BAKING... GARDENING... ADOPT-A-
HIGHWAY... HIKING... BIKING... WALKING... GAY SERVICES...
COMPILE A RESOURCE GUIDE... QUILTING GROUPS... AEROBICS
CLASSES... SOFTBALL TEAMS... DART LEAGUES... WELCOME
WAGONS... BOOK EXCHANGES... VIDEO EXCHANGES... GOLF
TEAMS... YOURS HERE.

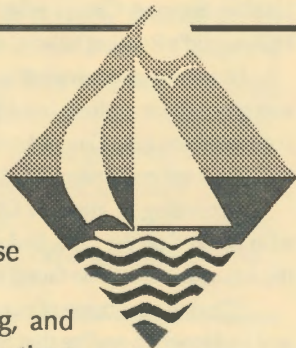
This is your opportunity to be part of something very positive... Any and all are asked to respond with your suggestions to either:

Tim Evans @ 1-616-348-8151

Larry Rogers @ 1-616-348-1622 Day Time
1-616-347-7123 Evenings/Weekends

Dan Doran @ 1-906-635-9263

June Weber @ 1-517-732-4144



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE: THE RESPONSE

Over the last few months there have been hundreds, perhaps thousands, of articles and opinions on same-sex marriage in newspapers around the country. It all began getting attention right around the Iowa primary, when some notable Republicans suggested that America adopt a "Defense of Marriage" stance.

Following this, many states have banned same-sex marriage and almost all others have debated the issue. The US Congress has even introduced their own bills that would condemn gay marriage while touting heterosexual marriages. I pulled the following opinions and fragmented articles to give you an idea of what is being said in defense of 'marriage for everyone.'

USA TODAY—COUNTERPOINTS COLUMN

By Susan Estrich

GAY MARRIAGE BATTLE ABOUT WHO WE ARE

LOS ANGELES- Was I the last one to learn that Dennis Rodman was a cross-dresser? Or to wonder how a country that celebrates him as a hero could also embrace the much-married hypocrites who have been touting the Marriage Defense Act for their own political gain?

I don't blame President Clinton for announcing up front that he'd sign a totally unnecessary bill of dubious constitutionality which contradicts every conservative principle of federalism. What choice did he have? We all know the Republicans would have wrapped this one around his neck if he didn't sign it; can you even imagine the 30-second ads?

But the legislation - which would deny federal benefits to same-sex couples - is still a disgrace. What are we so afraid of? That being gay - being the object of public derision, Satanic denunciation and widespread discrimination - will now be too attractive to our kids because the state of Hawaii might allow them court-authorized marriages?

Granting two people a license under civil law does not mean we approve of the union, but that we leave such decisions to the individuals, their families and their God. The difference between our religious beliefs and civil law is the definition of tolerance.

The real script here is political, and gays are just the latest pawns. Single-sex marriage makes sense in these terms. It's a classic wedge issue. You force the president to alienate some of his supporters. You divide Democrats, depress gay participation, and win points for values. What could go wrong?

Maybe we're better than they think. In the end, the real issue posed by the legislation is not your view of single-sex marriage, but your tolerance of nasty political mud fights at the expense of those whose votes aren't being sought. It's not really about them. It's about the rest of us. Americans may not like gay marriage, but we don't like gay-bashing either.

THE BOSTON GLOBE

ELLEN GOODMAN COLUMN

BOSTON—Memo to the Congress: Thanks for thinking of me, but I don't need you to defend my marriage. My husband and I can handle that ourselves.

Spare me "The Defense of Marriage Act" label on a bill banning same-sex marriages. The name implies that the value of heterosexual marriages goes down once you let homosexuals into the institution. There goes the neighborhood.

I don't buy this realtor's view of relationships. Gay and lesbian couples who want to wed aren't trying to assail the grounds for marriage. They're trying to share them. If anything, they want to stabilize the gay community.

This defense act dreamed up by the Republican right is a mischievous, gratuitous attempt to find a wedge in the political tool box. And now that President Clinton has promised to sign it, we ought to call it The Protection of Political Flank Act.

That said, I still want to ask how we ever got to the point where the dominant gay rights issue of 1996 is marriage. You couldn't pick a more volatile terrain.

We are all over the map on gay rights issues. There are places in America where it is still illegal to have same-sex sex, let alone marriage.

On Tuesday the Supreme Court ruled that a state couldn't ban civil rights protections for homosexuals. But that isn't the same as extending their rights. Even so, the ruling entailed a knock-down fight between justices that had Scalia sputtering about gays with "high disposable income" and "political power much greater than their numbers."

(Dear Antonin: If you want them to lose some of that high disposable income, encourage them to raise kids.)

Frankly, the wedding alarm bells sound like a diversion. There's lots of good old-fashioned discrimination going around in housing and jobs. There are plenty of hate crimes. And if you think that the issue of gays in the military has been resolved, don't ask and don't tell them that.

THE WASHINGTON POST Sunday, June 16, 1996
GAY MARRIAGE TRAP

*** We Fell Into a Right-Wing Ambush**

By Liz Spayd and Brigid Quinn

IN THE same week the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that gays cannot be categorically singled out for discrimination, President Clinton announced his intention to sign legislation that would deny

federal recognition of same-sex marriages. That a conservative court would take up the issue of homosexual rights for the first time in a decade and then rule in gays' favor is clear reason to celebrate. That a Democratic president would then seemingly knock us back down is, well, reason to celebrate too.

What's going on here? We're a gay couple, so how could we be cheering a president who claims to be for gays but against gay marriage? How could two women, together for seven years, applaud a White House decree that seems to so baldly undermine our relationship?

The gay movement's top ranks don't see it this way, but Clinton has displayed tactical skill by not grabbing the political bait conservatives were offering. Congressional Republicans had hoped to cast Clinton as a social extremist by introducing anti-gay legislation in an election year on the theory that a president who supported gays in the military would surely embrace gays in matrimony. He didn't, and the movement could someday have that to thank him for.

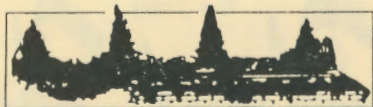
Thank him because Clinton's cunning may be the only thing saving the gay movement's broader civil rights agenda. The Supreme Court ruling opened a door to possible change, but gays can still be denied a job, refused a mortgage or rejected for health benefits solely on the basis of who they return home to at night. Now, suddenly, the fractious issue of same-sex marriage has erupted into the most critical issue defining gays in this country and their rights as citizens. And if the movement's chances of achieving more basic legal protections end up being forfeited because gay marriage has taken center court, we have only ourselves to blame.

Whether gay marriage is a good or bad thing is not so much the point. What should concern gays is that their leadership has played masterfully into conservative hands by allowing this to become the chief emblem of their cause.

THE NEW YORK TIMES Friday June 7, 1996
**GAY RIGHTS ADVOCATES QUESTION EFFORT TO
DEFEND SAME-SEX MARRIAGE**

By DAVID W. DUNLAP

Fearing a political battle that will divert attention from what they regard as more critical issues — and one that will ultimately be lost — some influential homosexuals are questioning the high-profile campaign by major gay groups to defend same-sex marriage.



Barker Creek Nursery
LANDSCAPING AND GARDEN CENTER

Gordon Coy
(616) 267-9451
7038 M-72 N.W., Williamsburg, MI 49690

Whitewater Landscaping & Lawn Care

BANKERS LIFE AND CASUALTY COMPANY

**A Trusted Name In Insurance
For Over 100 Years**

Long Term Care • Medicare Supplement
Income Replacement • Home Health Care
Annuity • Health • Life

814 S. Garfield Ave. Suite C
Traverse City, MI 49684
(616) 947-4390
S-5205

LINDA L. WIKLE
Agent

In the heat of a presidential campaign, an issue that lesbian and gay organizers had planned to advance much more deliberately has suddenly become a top priority.

"The Defense of Marriage Act is an out-of-control freight train and will be darn near impossible to stop," said David Smith, the communications director for the Human Rights Campaign, a national gay group. "We're treating it as an anti-gay attack and we're going to fight it tooth and nail until the bitter end."

That all-out strategy concerns other gay-rights advocates, who have tried not to break ranks publicly but have conceded in interviews that they are troubled by the way in which the issue is playing out.

"The gay and lesbian movement is marching down the wrong path and running a disastrous course," said Keith Boykin, executive director of the National Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum in Washington. "We don't have public support. We don't even have unanimity within the gay and lesbian community."

Paula Ettelbrick, legislative counsel to the Empire State Pride Agenda, a political group in New York state, said, "It doesn't seem worth it to put all our eggs in the marriage basket."

"Everything is being judged as good or bad according to one issue," Ms. Ettelbrick added. "That's very dangerous for us politically."

Even those in the gay rights movement who question the current political strategy agree that it would be ideal if the rights, benefits and responsibilities of civil marriage were extended to couples of the same sex.

Marriage so swiftly became the emblematic gay rights issue of the season that lesbian and gay organizers were left with little time to build political alliances.

"We have lost — if, in fact, we ever had — the luxury of deliberation and reflection," said Kathryn Kendell, the legal director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights in San Francisco. "We are now fighting for our political life."

"What we needed to learn from the military fight is that we have to build more political power before we win any gay issue on a national level," said Urvashi Vaid, who wrote "Virtual Equality: The Mainstreaming of Gay and Lesbian Liberation," which was published last year by Anchor Books.

"We didn't pick this fight," said Robert Knight of the Family Research Council in Washington. "The only reason there is this legislative activity is because homosexual activists have tried to impose their agenda through judicial fiat."

INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

-Staffwriter

"GAY MARRIAGE" BILL BECOMES LAW

The Althing, Iceland's legislative assembly, has (on 4 June 1996) made law a bill which in effect gives the go-ahead to gay marriage. Under the new law, homosexuals in officially registered 'confirmed cohabitation' are granted the same rights and duties, with certain exceptions, as married heterosexual couples.

Although generally seen as a major piece of human rights legislation, some in Iceland's gay community allege that the new law leaves legalised anti-gay discrimination intact. Such claims centre on the law's clauses which deny homosexuals in recognised cohabitation the right to adopt children or to avail of artificial insemination technology. (from the Iceland Review)

CANADA TO EXTEND SAME-SEX PARTNER HEALTH BENEFITS

OTTAWA - Canada's human rights tribunal ruled Thursday that the federal government must extend health benefits to same-sex partners of government employees.

"We have said all along that it was discriminatory to deny benefits to those in a same-sex relationship while extending the same benefits to heterosexual couples," Canadian Human Rights Commission chief commissioner Maxwell Yalden said in a news release.

The tribunal's decision was based on complaints by two federal employees against the departments of Immigration and Foreign Affairs.

The two alleged that they were discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation when their applications for benefits for their same-sex partners were denied.

"Lesbian and gay employees contribute to the same workplace benefit plans as heterosexuals. We are entitled to receive the equal benefit of those plans. Today's ruling is a milestone for us," said Stan Moore, a foreign service officer and one of the plaintiffs.

Canada's parliament recently passed a bill to add sexual orientation to the Canadian Human Rights Act, thus banning discrimination against homosexuals in federal agencies and federally regulated companies.

continued next page

THE BOOKIE JOINT
RECYCLED PAPERBACKS
ALSO SPECIALIZING IN
ALTERNATIVE & LESBIAN/GAY MAGAZINES AND BOOKS
WOMYN'S MUSIC, USED RECORDS AND COMICS
120 S. UNION ST. • TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684
616-946-8862

Jim Frees
Plant Haus
(616) 941-8868
Fax (616) 941-9063
• Hrs 9am-7pm Daily • Out of town phone 800-876-8868
1081 S. Airport Road West, Traverse City, MI 49686 (Colonial Square)

Thursday's tribunal ruling was based, however, on a 1992 decision by the Ontario Court of Appeal that the Canadian Human Rights Act can be interpreted to cover sexual orientation.

"This decision only applies to federal public servants. But if a similar case would go to a tribunal involving an airline or a railroad, which are federally regulated companies, we'd hope it would be the same kind of decision," said Canadian Human Rights Commission spokeswoman Donna Balkan.

She added that most federally regulated private companies already provide benefits for same-sex couples.

"For example most of the major banks, the (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation), Bell Canada, Air Canada, already provide these benefits. So we don't have very many cases at this point," Balkan said.

HUNGARY'S GAYS WELCOME LAW ON RIGHTS

BUDAPEST, Hungary - In early May, Hungary's gay community welcomed a new law giving homosexuals and heterosexuals equal legal and financial rights in long-term relationships, but said there was still room for improvement.

The Hungarian parliament passed the amendment to its Civil Code Tuesday by 207 votes to 73. There were five abstentions.

"We welcome the fact that parliament passed this law," Geza Juhasz of the gay organization Szivarvany (Rainbow) "But I don't think this proves that most MPs are more enlightened."

Opposition politicians voting against the amendment said it contradicts Hungary's values and public opinion.

"The law was actually imposed on parliament by the Constitutional Court," Juhasz said, adding that his organization said it was too early to talk of same-sex marriages.

"(Gay marriage) might become possible in a few years' time, but probably only in a legal construction giving actual marriage rights but using a different name," Juhasz said.

He added that while there has been notable improvement in gay rights during the last years, the process was very slow.

Hungarian legislation on homosexuality was relatively liberal, even in the communist era. While some other communist countries punished consenting adult homosexuals, Hungarian law only did so where one partner was under 18, the legal age of consent for homosexuals.

BLAIR SIGNALS DEAL ON GAYS

By Michael White, The Guardian

LONDON—Tony Blair signalled yesterday that an incoming Labour government would negotiate "proper codes of conduct with the military" over the acceptance of gays and lesbians in the armed forces — designed to reconcile concerns on both sides.

Gay lobbyists expressed dismay that the Labour leader — unlike 10 shadow cabinet colleagues — abstained rather than support Edwina Currie's amendment to the Armed Forces Bill which would have put homosexual and heterosexual conduct on the same disciplinary footing in the ranks.

SOUTH AFRICA GOVERNMENT PROTECTS GAYS AND LESBIANS

President Nelson Mandela's party reached agreement on May 7th with the white-led main opposition party on a new constitution, ensuring its passage as promised two years after the end of apartheid.

A bill of rights would guarantee the rights to adequate housing, food, water, education and health care, all of which were denied the black majority during the apartheid era. It also would ban discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or marital status.

RUSSIA'S GAYS VOTE AGAINST COMMUNIST PARTY

MOSCOW- Russia's gays and lesbians said that a communist victory in a presidential election on June 16 would have been a tragedy for the country.

"Under no circumstances would we have voted for Russian communist leader Gennady Zyuganov," Interfax news agency quoted the head of the gay and lesbian movement Roman Kalinin as saying. "A Communist president would be a tragedy not only for us, gays and lesbians, but for the whole of Russia."

Zyuganov was the strongest challenger to President Boris Yeltsin in the election.

Kalinin, who said the movement represented five percent of Russia's 150 million population, spoke after its congress in Moscow, which was closed to the press.

Under the old Soviet rules, gays faced jail terms of up to seven years under a law banning male homosexual acts which was repealed only in 1993. WGays still face strong prejudice in Russian society and most lead an underground lifestyle.

In early July, Boris Yeltsin was declared the winner in this year's Presidential election. (See related story: Russian Youth Given Asylum elsewhere in this issue-Editor)

21ST MICHIGAN WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL

August 13-18, 1996

Come and join us as we begin our third decade of enjoying the woods, the music, the extravagant days and star-filled nights... the womyn and magic of Michigan.

For brochure & ticket info: WWTMC, PO Box 22, Walhalla, MI 49458 (616) 757-4766

to discover her identity as a lesbian.

"As I got more healthy I was able to identify these issues. So then I got involved with the Out 'n About Coffeehouse, which actually started as a group of women who got together as a discussion group initiated by Loraine Anderson after she wrote the article in which she came out in the Record-Eagle. There was a group of about ten of us who got together to discuss the issues surrounding homophobia, internal and external. After a few meetings we came up with the concept of how networking and community really helps—especially for those of us who are up in the woods... homophobia can be exacerbated by being isolated—that's one aspect of it. So our discussion groups came to the topic of 'Why don't we have a coffeehouse?'"

And so they did it at Unity Church. Women came from all over, and the coffeehouse is now starting its third year of meeting one Saturday night a month.

"That was probably the start of my active career in the gay-lesbian community here. The coffeehouse put me in touch with a lot more lesbians in the community and other people and that's how I first discovered Friends North, who they were and what they did, and the Newsletter. And now here I am—on the board—and then I accepted the responsibility of being president until the end of the year. I think we've had a really good leadership person in Jim."

Carol noted that the board has spent a lot of time just with housekeeping issues because of several resignations and so has not focused on anything new so far this year.

"I'm still getting to know the organization and its history. It has been primarily a social organization... but I'd like to see us be a bit more political and maybe take on some new avenues of expression as an organization. One thing I am seeing is that with P-FLAG, GLSTN, the Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse, and Friends North there's a scattered attempt at a gay-lesbian community, but I'd like to see it be more cohesive. We have so many different personalities involved and so many different goals and no real money to do anything with... We need a center, even if it just starts out with a room—maybe I'll use my basement, I don't know—a couple of file cabinets, and a telephone."

"My experience at the Creating Change Conference (last fall in Detroit) is that is how a lot of places started—with Zero, Zippola—just energy and some really dedicated people and now some of them have million dollar budgets! And with the growth of our (Grand Traverse) community I think it is a possibility—a central place for the newsletter, the telephone line, a resource library, coffeehouse, meetings, etc. That is something to look forward to."

We got back to the subject of coming out.

"Nathan has just come along with me in my recovery and uncovering my sexuality. He was about 13—terrible age for a kid (to be hit with this) and he was pretty angry at first but I was just very honest with him. It came to a head and he said 'You're not who I thought you were' and I said 'I'm not who I thought I was. But regardless, I am your mother and I love you and will never, never do anything that would hurt you... He cried and I cried...'"

"It was a challenge for him to face his friends and what they



Carol looking very glamorous in the crotch of a tree.

might say and how he felt about it and yet I never would pretend in front of his friends... He had his friends come over to spend the night and it was OK..."

Carol nearly ran the car off the road one night when this dialogue took place in the back seat:

Nathan: Hey Jeff, did you know my Mom's a lesbian?

Jeff: Yeah, right, and I'm Johnny Carson.

Nathan: No, really.

Jeff: Oh, really. Oh, that's cool.

"And then they started talking about Nintendo, or something. I had no idea he was going to say this—much less in front of me. I could imagine them talking in their bedroom..."

Carol came out to her mother quite soon after she figured it out for herself.

"But I do remember an incident years ago: I had a crush on one of my teachers in fourth grade. I talked about her constantly. My mom said to me 'You know, the way you talk about her I'd think you were in love with her.' And the way she said it I knew I'd better not talk about this any more. I can remember it was clear as yesterday. It was almost like being whacked. What have I done now!"

"So, I eventually came out to the rest of my family, my brothers and my sister and they all said 'Oh, well, we figured that anyway.' No one was surprised—not really. I had done all the standard things when I was growing up. I was married for a while, and I lived with Nathan's father for a few years."

"And I've noticed this phenomenon with women who have known pretty much all their lives about their lesbianism... they've grown up with the homophobia and the fear that used to be more prevalent, I feel, then it is today. And with women like myself who have more recently discovered their lesbianism, I didn't grow up with that fear. I didn't live with it for 40 years. I don't know it as much. It's a lot easier for me to be more vocal and out at work with my co-workers. At least that's one of my personal theories... I'm certainly grateful to be where I am today.