

NETWORKING 45° NORTH

VOLUME 10 • ISSUE 2 • March • April • 1996

TRAVERSE CITY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION SEEKS POLICY CHANGE

At the February meeting of the Traverse City Human Rights Commission (HRC) a motion was made to move forward with a request that the City of Traverse City add the words "Sexual Orientation" to their internal city personnel anti-discrimination policy. If added, this would mean that a person working for the City of Traverse City could not be discriminated against on the basis of their "sexual orientation."

Carol Anderson and Pam Haley are heading the committee representing the HRC, to move forward with this motion.

They are asking for your assistance with this issue. If you work for agencies or companies that already have "sexual orientation" in their internal personnel policies, or if you are currently living or working in the Traverse City area and are willing to write a letter of support to the Traverse City City Commission, please send these items to the address below.

They will try to let you know when this request will come before the City Commission in the event you would like to be at that meeting.

Please remember when writing your letters that they are only seeking to change internal city personnel policy and nothing else at this time. Send letters or policies to:

Traverse City Human Rights Commission
c/o City Personnel Office
400 Boardman
Traverse City, MI 49684
Attention: Pam Haley or Carol Anderson

MICHIGAN PRIDE CELEBRATIONS ANNOUNCED

LANSING: June 21-23—Set aside this weekend for all the activities surrounding the largest Michigan Pride gathering ever. Although negotiations are not yet settled, a concert, a street fair, a commitment ceremony and a parade are in the works. For further information will be published in the next issue of *Networking 45° North*.

GRAND RAPIDS: Saturday, June 15, 4 p.m.

1996 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 21 - Spring High Tea

2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Traverse City Opera House

Refreshments

Membership Drive/Socialize/Network

June 15- F/N Pride Picnic Celebration

Location to be announced

June 21-23 - Pride Celebration in Lansing

July 9 - Bed Race, TC Cherry Festival

July 26-28, Friends North Bike Tour

Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore

September - Autumn Hike and Dinner

(date and location to be announced)

October 11 - National Coming Out Day

Celebration to be announced

October 10-13, Wellness AIDS Quilt Trip to Washington D.C.

Call Tom at 947-4647 for details

October 25-27, 2nd Annual Gay & Lesbian History & Education Conference

Sugar Loaf Resort

December 3 - Friends North Annual Meeting

Unitarian Universalist Church - Traverse City

Mark your calendars now so you won't miss any of the events. Details will be published in future issues of *Networking 45° North* as the events approach. For more information call 946-1804.

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.

Greg Baird	Victor Dinsmore—secretary	M'Lynn Hartwell
Jim Ingelson—president	Tom Kincaid	Carol Lambertson—VP
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 #3—April 15; Issue #4—June 15; 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

Richard Tuxbury

FROM THE EDITOR



Gay marriage is out of the closet. Do you remember a few months ago when we talked about the fact that same-sex marriage was going to get a lot of press in the upcoming year? In this short, six-week period, every major paper in the country, and most minor ones, have had something to say about the issue. We were told to prepare ourselves for civilized debate with a public that was both receptive and objective.

Nothing of the sort occurred. The subject inarguably became the hottest, most controversial topic in today's race for the Republican nomination. Most of the candidates, besides Buchanan, would choose not to alienate gays and lesbians, as was seen by Dole's thousand-dollar blunder with the Log Cabin Club. However, the Christian Coalition and Colorado for Family Values pushed the issue into the faces of all the candidates, and under this pressure and incredible media scrutiny, almost all the candidates buckled under. The result was a major show of Republican cowardice and prejudice, as they bowed to the powerful and demanding Religious Right.

The climax came with the Anti-Gay Marriage Rally, held in Des Moines just before the primary caucus was held in Iowa. Many candidates attended, and the rest sent letters of support. As one journalist described this event, "it was a blood-fest of gay bashing."

This rally produced a Marriage Resolution, and would seem to contradict itself. It describes marriage as a "special sanction" that is reserved for heterosexual couples. The anti-gay Religious Right has said a lot about "special rights" over the last few years. They discount gay people's claims for equal access to justice (the right to legal recourse when discriminated against) as a "special right" and therefore we should not be entitled to it. By their own admission, marriage is now seen as a "special right" and they have decided that it should be "reserved" for one group of people, in this case, it is the heterosexuals.

Candidate Buchanan signed the resolution even after declaring that "no special rights should attain to anyone because of what they do in their bedrooms." Now, isn't that straight marriage?

Many of the states, mostly in the west and central U.S., have had proposals put in front of their legislatures regarding the marriage issue. These would ban the recognition of same-sex marriages in their states, if indeed another state went ahead and sanctioned the marriage. At last count, there were maybe 8 or 10 states that had brought up this subject, and the bills are in various stages of consideration. However, South Dakota and Utah have already rushed to pass these laws. None of the laws have been tested in a court.

Since gays and lesbians have become the 'whipping boy' of choice by the Right (and almost all of the Republican candidates have gotten in a lick or two) let's see if their strategy is successful or not. How much intolerance and blatant discrimination can average, straight Americans listen to before they stand up for us and what is right?

Buchanan and the like are betting that most Americans don't give a damn about us. They're placing all their bets that the majority of voting Americans are selfish, stupid, and bigoted, and that they can be manipulated by shallow rhetoric... well, are you getting nervous yet? We all have reason to be.

From the Editor (continued next page)



January was a sad month for Traverse City and the community of Friends North. We lost Kevin Wolf in a car accident. Kevin was a dynamic and beautiful young man of 27, and he will be missed by everyone who met him. No words can express to Kevin's partner, and our Friends North president, Jim Ingleson, how we grieve for him. We have reprinted Kevin's obituary from the Record Eagle elsewhere in this issue.



Thanks go to Liz, my talented friend and colleague, for her inspiration on the new look to our front page. For those of you who don't know, this part of the paper is called a 'flag.' (And who would know this?)



I have come across a remarkable person, online, in the last few months. His name is Bill Stosine, and you might remember him as a consistent letter writer to the Record-Eagle. Actually, Bill is from Iowa City, Iowa, and contributes to many papers around the country. He spends much of his time compiling articles that are of interest to the gay and lesbian community, reading many national newspapers and magazines. We can attribute a number of the stories in this issue to him. Thanks for all the hard work, Bill. (He can be found online at BCS41@aol.com.)

Richard Tuxbury

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I have been so overwhelmed by all the love and support I have received from so many members of our community during this most difficult time... the past six weeks has taught me a lot about life as a gay man. On January 12, 1996, Kevin Wolf, my partner, of what I had felt would be the rest of my life, was killed in a car accident. I am very lucky because our families valued and respected our relationship and understood who we were to each other.

Shortly after his death, his cousin, who works at Munson Medical Center, was approached about talking to his family about organ donations. He said he would be glad to speak to the family and questioned what information he needed to ask. One of the questions was whether Kevin had had any gay relationships. When the response was yes, and that his partner was in the waiting room, the organ and tissue representative said there was no need to go any further. Kevin was 27 years old and had just received perfect results from his yearly physical; everything was great... but they did not even ask, just walked away.

I also have found similar responses from the offices I contacted on both the state and national levels — that as gay people our organs are not considered even though at present, there are 30,000 people waiting on the kidney list alone.

When informed later, I was heart broken, and with our families was shocked and so saddened by what would have been

a chance to have something positive come from Kevin's sudden death. I will continue collecting information and submit an article for a future newsletter. Anyone who would like to help or has reactions contact me through Friends North.

This reminds me of my response to the phrase "The Gay Lifestyle." What I see and feel is life—just like everyone around us. It is not a style, it is a life, a life filled with happiness and sorrows, good days and bad... But most importantly, it finds us unprotected by the laws that protect all other tax paying U.S. citizens... With Kevin's death I suddenly didn't exist where the laws were concerned. Luckily his family's love for us and support has helped me to care for his wishes and his life in the ways he would have wanted.

We must continue the struggle to be recognized and allowed to protect our lives. First Big Step—voting in the November election. The Pat Bucannans of the world would like laws passed to prevent passage of any laws to grant us the basic rights we presently do not have... scary thought... every vote counts!
Jim Ingleson

FRIENDS NORTH SPONSORS "THIS WAY OUT"

Gretchen Sauvage

The national gay and lesbian radio news magazine This Way Out which airs every Sunday evening at 7:30 on WNMC 90.9 FM is now sponsored by Friends North. Get news about events that effect the gay community around the world and around the nation. Hear interviews with gay leaders, authors, entertainers and people shaping the future of how gay life is viewed. All this comes to you in the half hour series.

If you would like to help continue the airing of This Way Out send a donation to Friends North earmarked for This Way Out. If you want to help continue the existence of the program This Way Out become a weekly listener.

For those of you out of range of WNMC, don't despair. WNMC has the paperwork grinding through the FCC to increase their range to about a 40 mile radius.

To quote the staff of This Way Out, "An informed community is a strong community." So start to become part of our strong community, listen to This Way Out!


**Bay
Business
Services
Inc.**

Office: (616) 941-5748

ANDREW L. MITCHELL

Accounting & Tax Service

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



Out,ⁿ + About

A Lesbian Coffeehouse

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

The Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse has some very fine and very exciting upcoming events to announce. We cordially invite everyone who has ever attended a coffeehouse to return and extend a hearty invitation to those lesbians who have yet to cross our threshold for our special events planned for March and April.

In March, to tie in with the national proclamation of March as Women's History Month, we have arranged to present "The Second Coming of Joan of Arc" by Carolyn Gage, an Oregon playwright. This is a two act stage play based on the actual trial transcripts of Joan of Arc, recorded during her witchcraft and heresy trial in 1430-31 CE (common era). Performer phoenix Hummel will bring Joan to life by addressing the historical facts of Joan's still-contemporary problems and her passionate love of women.

This play will be brought to the Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse stage on Saturday, March 16. The production will begin at 7:30 pm. Coffee, soft drinks and snacks will be served prior to the performance, during intermission and after. A cover donation of \$5 is suggested (more if you can).

On Saturday, April 20, we proudly present musician and singer Alix Dobkin. She is a leader, a mover and shaker, and a sustainable resource for the genre of Womyn's music, having been "out" on stages around the world and in our own backyard (MI Womyn's Music Festival) since the mid-70's. Alix is a well-respected and much-loved Dyke who has shared herself and her experiences through her music, from the times when many of us had only those early album covers to hold. She still has much to sing and say for those of us who remember the earliest years of lesbian visibility, but she has also much to share for lesbians who are just taking their places on the "time line" of our lesbian future.

"Her message is clear and intense; felt right to the bone and deep into the heart. She has been bringing blatant lesbianism into the lives of lesbians and anyone else who is interested in knowing why Lavender Jane really loves womyn or knowing how to successfully manage love, politics, and chew lesbian culture all at the same time."—San Diego Lesbian Press.

Alix will begin her performance at 8:00 pm. A cover donation will be sliding-scale from \$5-\$10. Get set to laugh and cry and sway and sigh! This will be a night that Northwest Michigan lesbians won't soon forget.

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.)

THE NAMES PROJECT AIDS MEMORIAL QUILT

—WASHINGTON D.C. OCTOBER 10 THRU OCTOBER 14, 1996

On the weekend of October 11-13, 1996, hundreds of thousands of people will converge on our nation's capitol to participate in the largest AIDS awareness event in history. Just weeks before the Presidential and Congressional elections, the NAMES Project has planned a full weekend of activities designed to ensure that AIDS is made a top priority on our nation's agenda.

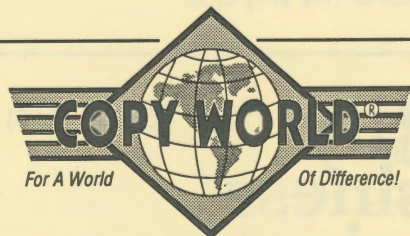
As 45,000 AIDS Memorial Quilt panels—15 city blocks of fabric—are unfolded, the names of the dead will ring out over the open expanse of the National Mall. Over the course of the weekend, volunteers will read more than 70,000 names from the Quilt, more names than appear on the nearby Vietnam War Memorial. Please join us for this memorable event. Together we can make a difference.

From Traverse City you are invited to join us on a Deluxe Motor Coach which will depart on Thursday afternoon, October 10th and will arrive back in Traverse City on Sunday afternoon, October 14th, 1996. Your cost is only \$175.00 per person—quadruple room occupancy, which includes motor coach trip and two nights lodging at the Holiday Inn Capitol—seven blocks from the display.

For reservations and information contact:
Tom Kincaid at 616-947-4647 or send a \$75.00 deposit to:

AIDS Quilt Trip
208 Circle Drive, Apt. C
Traverse City, MI 49684

Please make checks payable to Wellness Networks
For scholarship information please call
Wellness Networks at 616-933-0279



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.



MESSAGES FROM CINDY

Cindy Robb,

reprinted from the February P-FLAG Newsletter

February is already proving to be a busy month !! I do hope you will plan to attend this month's meeting. Legal issues is the focus. Dean will be looking at comparisons between the Black civil rights movement and G/L civil rights. He will fill us in on some of the tactics that proved to be successful and how we might modify and use them today. Thom will address employment law, and Kirk will look at the right to marry and there may be discussion on how to best protect yourself if you're in a committed G/L relationship (wills, insurance, etc.) Bring all your questions because none of the lawyers will be charging an hourly rate !!!!

PFLAG has been invited to the White House ! All the mom's and dad's going to Washington for ENDA on March 19 have been invited to a reception to be hosted by Tipper Gore ! PLEASE contact me as soon as possible if you are interested in going, I have all the information. Michigan is still one of the few states not firmly committed to attend. I wish I were going but I will be on a plane headed elsewhere with my family.

I just returned home from Virginia Beach where I attended a meeting hosted by Dr. Mel White author of "Stranger at the Gate". He launched a petition drive to plead with Pat Robertson to stop his anti-G/L talk on his 700 club program. He has monitored the 700 club for the past nine months and played a 35-minute video of all the anti-G/L untruths. I have transcripts of the video and as soon as Mel's attorney's clear the legal path he'll send us a copy of the video ! It is simply unbelievable the way Pat Robertson lumps our children together with child molesters, drug dealers, Nazi's, and other unspeakables, to create a climate of fear and hate so strong that people send him zillions of dollars to keep them safe here and assure them a seat on the bus to heaven. Mel White and his partner Gary have committed a year of their life as well as their savings to stop the destructive, untruths being perpetuated out of certain evangelists. I have complete admiration and respect for Mel and Gary and can't promise anything yet but I'm hoping to bring them to Traverse City. If they accept, I'm going to need tons of help !!

It will be big. We do have acceptance from Gershen Kaufman and Lev Raphael !! PFLAG, Friends North, and Out and About Lesbian

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

Coffee House are sponsoring a "Coming out of Shame" workshop May 4 & 5. It is definitely happening and the tuition is not etched in stone yet but we think we can do it for around \$25.00 !

Lev and Gersh are not only Ph.D.. professors at Michigan State University, authors of the newly hot book "Coming out of Shame", but they are the coolest, most lovable, sensitive, human beings I've met in a long time. The workshop will be limited to 35 people so if you plan to attend... DON'T WAIT. You can sign up at this months meeting !

This month holds Valentines Day !!! My greatest hope for us all is that our lives are filled with the love of family and friends ! There are times as parents and friends that fears and striving to understand the world get in the way of our love. It is important to remember we are all standing on different rungs on the ladder of life and the view is never exactly the same. If we can understand that, we can respect our differences. If you have understanding and respect, you have love.

Love, Cindy

Shame Workshop Planned

Friends North, P-FLAG and Out n' About Lesbian Coffeeshouse are pleased to announce that shame experts Gershen Kaufman and Lev Raphael will conduct a workshop on shame for gays', lesbians, their families and friends in Leland on May 4-5 (Saturday evening and all day Sunday).

Cost is \$25, which includes a lunch on Sunday. The workshop will be held at the Art Building in Leland on E. Cedar Street near the Leland Library.

Space is limited to 40 participants, so please pre-register as soon as possible using the form below. There will be no registration at the workshop. The deadline for registration is April 1. If there is an over-registration, a second workshop may be held in the fall. Confirmation, a map, and details about exact times will be mailed to you. If there is over-registration, your check will be returned.

For more information, call Carol at 616-929-7476

WORKSHOP REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

St _____ Zip _____

Day Phone _____

Evening Phone _____

Please include check for \$25 per person made out to Friends North.
Mail completed registration form to:

**Workshop
Friends North
P.O. Box 562
Traverse City, MI 49685-0562**

Contributions

FROM THE COMMUNITY

PONDERING BLACK HISTORY MONTH AS A WHITE LESBIAN

by Andie Baja Lluvia

Not too many months ago I was on a panel of gays and lesbians who had been asked to share their experiences of homophobia with a college class of social science students.

During the question-and-answer session afterward, a young woman in the front row told us—in a shaky voice and in near tears—that she knew how we felt. Our experience was hers, she said.

Whoa, I thought, this woman's coming out as a lesbian in front of her class.

Not exactly.

She knew how we felt, she said, because she was a fundamentalist Christian and had undergone the same kind of persecution we had.

I'm thinking about her a lot this month—February—because it's Black History Month and I've heard white gays and lesbians say the same thing to African Americans. I've also had to resist the temptation to do the same thing.

I can't speak for African Americans when they hear such things. But I do know how I felt when that young woman told me her experience as a fundamentalist Christian was the same as mine as a lesbian.

I felt as though she had not heard a word I or any of the other panelists had said. I felt that she had completely disregarded and diminished what we said by stealing our experience and trying to make it hers.

I believed that she did feel persecuted because I'm sure she has been trashed by people who are so angry about what some fundamentalist Christians are saying that they will take it out on anyone who identifies as a fundamentalist.

Persecution of any kind results in feelings that are similar. However, I don't think her experience as a fundamentalist Christian—a major form of Christianity that has existed, been accepted as a norm and thrived in openness—is the same as gay-lesbian experience. She had white privilege, Christian privilege in a predominately Christian country and heterosexual privilege.

All she did by saying what she did was turn the focus on her instead of hearing what a panel of gays and lesbians were saying about their experience.

That is, I think, what white gays and lesbians do when the subject is racism and we say the experience of blacks and other minority groups is the same as ours.

Our experience may be similar in some ways, but not the same.

We gays and lesbians owe a lot to the civil rights struggles of all minority groups. We can learn a lot to empower ourselves by learning more about the history of African Americans, Jews, Latinos and Native Americans.

But it is important, especially as a white, to resist the temptation to claim the struggle of other minorities as my own. I still enjoy white privilege and can still "pass" if I chose.

I can read. I can inform myself. I can try to understand, but I simply cannot know on a psychological-historical-cultural level what Black people have been through over generations of living with white supremacy, how this experience of oppression and suppression has affected African Americans as individuals and as communities.

For me to say that my experience is the same as that of African Americans is to not understand anything about racism in our country and how I unknowingly participate in white supremacy.

Having said all that, I would just like to make mention of one African American—bell hooks—who through writing about her experience as a Black woman trying to survive in a system of white supremacy, has helped me understand how I, as a lesbian, have survived and what I repressed to do it.

I owe a lot to her "truth-telling."

"Commitment to truth-telling is... the first step in the process of self-recovery," she writes in her book "Sisters of the Yam." "A culture of domination is necessarily a culture where lying is an acceptable social norm. It is, in fact, required. White folks knew that they were lying about African slaves who labored from sun-up to sundown when they then told the world that those same slaves were lazy. White supremacy has always relied upon a structure of deceit to perpetuate degrading racial stereotypes, myths that Black people were inferior, more "animalist." Within the colonizing process, Black people were socialized to believe that survival was possible only if they learned how to deceive. And indeed, this was often the case."

One of the problems I personally have since coming out publicly is accessing some of my memories of growing up in a homophobic culture. It is important that I do "find my truth" because the seeds of

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.

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

my internalized homophobia are planted there in beds of pain. Until recently, there were very few books that specifically addressed gay-lesbian shame and this process of internalized self-hatred.

In reading bell hooks, I have sometimes translated "black" into "lesbian or gay," and it has helped me remember and validate some of the shame feelings I have internalized as a woman in a culture of male privilege, as a lesbian in a homophobic culture of heterosexual privilege. From there, I have been able to go on and find my own truth.

I owe African Americans a lot. I need to honor their experience, not take it.

GLSTN

Teachers Release New Video Which is Setting the Record Straight on Homophobia in Schools

The Gay, Lesbian, Straight Teachers Network (GLSTN) released a new video entitled "Setting the Record Straight." Made by Philadelphia film maker Jim Caiola (winner of a 1995 National Golden Apple Award for his educational film "AIDS: The Next Generation"), "Setting the Record Straight" features lesbian, gay and straight teachers and youth addressing how homophobia damages schools in a dramatic 11-minute video.

GLSTN Executive Director, Kevin Jennings characterizes the film as a direct response to anti-gay events such as the U.S. House "Hearings on Parents, Schools, and Values" (held at the behest of far right Traditional Values Coalition in December, 1995) as well as propaganda such as "The Gay Agenda", a video distributed to thousands of churches by far right groups over the past few years.

"We are tired of having ourselves defined by people who portray us as predators and child molesters," Jennings said. "The point of the film is to give local organizers a tool with which they can fight back the next time there is an anti-gay initiative in their community, especially one dealing with youth or schools. Such initiatives can only succeed if their supporters can demonize us. We feel the film does an excellent job of putting a human face on the issue and communicating why homophobia must be addressed in schools."

Jennings reported that the first public showings of the film were in Seattle on January 27 and in Boston on February 8 at events attended by approximately fifty people each, and that he envisions it being used in similar settings across the country by GLSTN chapters and other such groups. "It's basically a tool to start a conversation among friends and communities, hopefully on a small scale, where fears can be addressed and overcome. We plan to use it to win our friends and co-workers over, one heart at a time."

Jennings added that local GLSTN chapters would premier the film over a period of the next two months at public events in over twenty cities, and that the video will also be available for other individuals and organizers to utilize. He added that this is the first of three videos GLSTN will produce, with future projects featuring a training video for school staff on the needs of gay and lesbian students as well as a film on lesbian and gay history designed for high school students. "It's the MTV generation, and we've got to use this medium if we're going to be successful," Jennings said. "If the radical right can do it with "The Gay Agenda", so can we."

With over thirty chapters, and a membership of over three thousand teachers, parents, and concerned citizens, the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Teachers Network (GLSTN) is the largest national organization working to insure that schools are places where all people are respected and valued, regardless of sexual orientation.

[Note: To order copies of "Setting the Record Straight" call GLSTN at 212-727-0135 or send e-mail to GLSTN@aol.com. Videos are in VHS format; price is \$29.95, plus shipping and handling; the running time is 11 minutes.]

CREATING BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

— A Learning / Discussion Series —

FREE Introduction and Course Description

March 26, 1996

For more information contact:

David Blisk, M.A., L.P.C.

12549 So. Maple City Road

Maple City, MI 49664

(616) 228-5105

Hands on Wheels

Robin R. Clinton

Massage Therapist

Massage Therapy available in your home or office (616) 885-2484

Equine Massage (616) 885-2484

Kalkaska Chiropractic Center (616) 258-8678

Graduate of Health Enrichment Center

Member of Associated Body Work & Massage Professionals

PERRY SHERWOOD FINE ART

200 Howard Street • Petoskey • 348-5079

A Book Review:

by Loraine Anderson

"Coming out of Shame: Transforming Gay and Lesbian Lives," by Gershen Kaufman, Ph.D., and Lev Raphael, Ph.D. (Doubleday, \$22.95)

I first heard of Gersh Kaufman in 1987 when I went to a conference at the Park Place with a friend who was working on issues stemming from childhood sexual abuse. Shame is one of the core issues for abuse survivors. Kaufman, an Okemos clinical psychologist and professor at Michigan State University, had done a lot of the founding work on the importance of healing shame when working with abuse survivors.

At the time, I was just trying to be supportive to a friend and had no idea what shame was. It would be six years later before I would painfully become aware that my shame as a lesbian filled me with a crippling self-hatred that kept me closeted from a wider community and living in a state of fear.

I first heard of Lev Raphael after he read my name in a New York Times article about gay and lesbian journalists. Lev had seen the Times story and dashed off a congratulatory letter and tucked some magazine and newspaper articles into the envelope that told me more about himself, his books and short stories, and that Gersh was his partner. I went out and immediately bought his books and Gersh's. We met a few weeks later over coffee.

By this time, I knew very well what shame was and how it had grown like that tenacious vine, kudzu, around my psyche and heart, entwining itself through my thoughts, my dreams, choking me and tripping me, filling me with dis-ease, keeping me from being all that I could be.

That kudzu was my internalized homophobia, and it wasn't until I found all the runners and traced them back to the chief roots that I could begin to dig out and heal.

I did this by reading books about healing from childhood sexual abuse and translating it to my situation. At the time, I didn't really know why I was doing this, only that I felt drawn to the subject though I had never been molested. It was only after I came out publicly that I understood for the first time that homophobia, for me, was a form of battering and psychological maiming.

"Coming Out of Shame: Transforming Gay and Lesbian Lives" is an excellent book for everyone, but most of all for gays and lesbians because we don't have to translate psychological theories and processes to our experience.

The result of 15 years of collaboration, "Coming Out of Shame" is the first book to systematically apply shame theory to the lesbian-gay experience. It combines the talents and knowledge of two brilliant men: Gersh, psychologist, writer, lecturer, and professor whose pioneering work on shame has made him a leading authority nationwide on the subject; and Lev, an educator and prize-winning author of fiction, a book on the role shame played in Edith Wharton's life and a book on self-esteem for children, which he co-authored with Gersh. The two have been life partners for more than 10 years.

"Coming Out of Shame" is rich with anecdotes and real-life examples from their own and others' lives. The book also pays attention to the importance of community, spirituality, the effects of anti-gay rhetoric and messages and the responsibility of those who foment them.

This book tells gays and lesbians directly how shame originates in us, what it does to us and how to heal from it.

Shame, Kaufman and Raphael say, may be the most disturbing emotion in the human experience. It is what makes people feel worthless, deficient and unspeakably inferior. Gay men and lesbians shaped by society's negative attitudes toward them—have long suffered shame's crippling effects: self-loathing, divided self, disrupted intimacy, low self-esteem, identity problems.

There are multiple sources of gay shame: individual, familial, cultural and religious. Shame itself has been the principle source of the unique form of oppression suffered by lesbians and gays everywhere: silence.

The key, Kaufman and Raphael say, is to break the silence that is the hallmark of shame. Coming out is a major step, but doesn't completely dissolve gay shame, particularly when shaming messages continue to bombard gays and lesbians daily.

Healing from shame, they say, is important to gay identity, gay community and power. But denial of shame is also a problem.

In their book, they explain the process of how and why shame becomes internalized, probe the four critical emotions that make up homophobia, offer strategies for healing and how to "collect and store" self-esteem, and reveal how to enhance self-esteem, deepen intimacy and strengthen identity.

The first chapter is academic, giving a detailed explanation of shame theory, which provides the framework for the rest of this well-written and interesting book. Using personal accounts of gay men and women, including some of their own as a couple, Kaufman and Raphael clearly and with good focus explore how shame affects gays and lesbians as individuals, in relationships and in their various communities.

One of the things I particularly enjoyed as a reader is that they go into many varieties of gay-lesbian relationships, without judgment, and explain psychological factors at work.

"We can't ignore or underestimate the impact of shame in our community, whether through addiction, political infighting, denial or contempt for other gays and lesbians." They write in their final chapter "Revisioning Our Lives, Reinventing Ourselves."...

"Attaining a measure of power may deceive us into believing that shame has been vanquished, when it still operates to undermine our resolve and self-esteem. We need to neutralize shame in order to have real power.

"...By transforming our lives through coming out of shame, we transform the culture's perception and understanding of our lives, finally breaking the equation that gay = shame."



ERNIE DAWSON
OWNER

*Flowers
By Josie*

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

Flowers • Gifts • Antiques



WORDS AND MUSIC: WHAT'S NEW IN BOOKS, MAGAZINES, CD'S AND TAPES

By Rick Gould

Here are some suggestions by local stores for your springtime listening and reading pleasure.

Shelley at **The Bookie Joint** has given us a number of ideas when it comes to magazines, books and music:

Some new magazines at **The Bookie Joint** include: *Urban Fitness*, *50/50*—which covers gay and lesbian culture, *Our World*—a travel mag, *Lesbian News*, *Frontiers*—gay West Coast news and info, and the *Lesbian Connection*—from East Lansing.

New book titles include:

Lieutenant Nun: Memoirs of a Basque Transvestite in the New World by Catalina de Erauso, \$16.95. This story is about a young woman who runs away from a convent in the 1500's and fights in the Spanish Conquest of Peru and Chile, disguised as a man. She leads a wild and passionate life and in 1626 is granted permission by the Pope to continue her life as a man. I see Madonna in the movie version. How about you?

Female Problems: An Unhelpful Guide by Nicole Hollander, \$9.95. Cartoons and humorous essays, including "Why It's Okay to Identify with the Evil Queen Rather than Snow White." I just assumed we all did!

Carrington: A Life by Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina, \$15.00. No, this isn't about a Dynasty character, although this artist's life was nearly as steamy. Dora Carrington was a bisexual painter who fell deeply in love with the gay writer Lytton Strachey. Emma Thompson stars as Carrington in the same titled movie version. And Kenneth Branagh does not play Strachey.

A Ghost in the Closet by Mabel Manley, \$10.95. Introduced by the Hardley Boys, these two intrepid gay sleuths join forces with Nancy Clue (or is that Clue-less) and Cherry Aimless, in a parody of certain childhood mystery favorites.

Music on Tape or CD's:

Can We Go Home Again by the Roches, \$10.98-cassette and \$14.98-CD. If you saw them here in concert recently, no doubt you'll want this latest effort.

Hand in Hand by Various Artists, \$13.98-CD only. Today's up and coming gay, lesbian, bisexual and gay-friendly performers are represented including Pussy Tourette, Nancy Ford, and Romanoff and Phillips. I guess this means Kathy Lee Gifford does not warble a tune here.

At **Waldenbooks**, Kevin gives us the following list:

Eros in Boystown: Contemporary Gay Poems About Sex edited by Michael Lassell, \$15.00. A compact design and carefully selected erotic poems make this a perfect gift. Contributions by Stephen Spender, Hart Crane, Allen Ginsberg and Paul Monette.

Not Like Other Boys, Growing Up Gay: A Mother and Son Look Back by Marlene and Christopher Shyer, \$21.95. In alternating voices, this mother and son memoir depicts the parallel lives they led during the years before his homosexuality was acknowledged. The

book details the stages they went through until there came acceptance.

The Arc of Love: An Anthology of Lesbian Love Poems edited by Clare Coss, \$18.00. A sophisticated collection of poetry that explores all aspects of women loving women. Includes Audre Lorde, Joy Harjo, June Jordan and virtually voices from all nationalities.

American Studies by Mark Merlis, \$10.95. This novel begins as an older man is recovering from a brutal beating in a hospital, where he recalls the troubled life of his former mentor, a once-famous professor who was driven to suicide during the McCarthy era.

Franny, The Queen of Provincetown by John Preston, \$8.95. The lead character sounds like a cross between Auntie Mame and the Nanny! Drag queen Franny looks after the men of Provincetown (hmmm) with genuine caring and concern. Franny wants to make a place in the world for those who don't fit in and the world a better place for everyone—just like Diana Ross!

Jack of Hearts by Joseph Hansen, \$10.95. This is a prequel to Hansen's classic *Living Upstairs*. The story takes readers back to early 1940s California, when 17-year-old Nathan Reed is coming -of-age. This novel is being praised as funny, tender and truthful.

At **Horizon Books**, Alex gave us these recommendations:

Aimee and Jaguar by Erica Fischer, \$24.00. This is a translation from the German book by Edna McCown. It tells the true story of a hidden Jew and the wife of a Nazi officer who fall in love in 1943 Berlin. After the two women's affair is discovered, the Jewish woman is sent to the Czech ghetto and the gentile sets off to find her.

Chloe Plus Olivia edited by Lillian Faderman, \$16.95. This an anthology of lesbian literature from the Seventeenth century to the present and is the winner of the Lambda Literary Award. Divided by genres, the work ranges from 17th century writer Katherine Phillips to modern day Dorothy Allison.

The Family Heart: A Memoir of When Our Son Came Out by Robb Forman Dew, \$11.00. The title says it all, but the story is told with honesty and humor. One critic praised the book's best moments when the Dew's came out to the community as parents of a gay child.

Sister and Brother: Lesbians and Gay Men Write About their Lives Together, edited by Joan Nestle and John Preston, \$13.00. Another Lambda Literary Award winner. Alex says this is a well-reviewed and excellent collection of thought-provoking and funny stories.

Book List continued next page

HAIR FORCE ONE

801 West Front Street
Traverse City, MI 49684

For Appointment Call
941-8255

Mark Lizenby

The Book of Knowledge by Doris Grumbach, \$22.00. This novel depicts the lives of four young people during the Depression and a relationship that develops between the two young men.

At B. Dalton's Beth gave us this list:

Finding Love in a Man-Eat-Man World: The Intelligent Guide To Gay Dating, Romance and Eternal Love by Craig Nelson, \$12.95. No, the author isn't TV's Coach, that's Craig T. Nelson! This Nelson draws on interviews and his own life experiences in the gay dating game to present this revealing and often humorous guide. Nelson explores issues beginning with the baggage people bring to a relationship, breaking down barriers, or just surviving a breakup. And remember, dating is often funny.

Fairy Tales by Peter Cashorali, \$18.00. Traditional stories re-told by gay men. And remember, it's okay to want to be the Evil Queen and not Snow White!

Dyke Life by Karla Jay, \$23.00. The author has brought together essays by a fascinating array of lesbian and bisexual women of different ages, races and backgrounds.

B. Dalton's also carries *The Advocate*, *Genre* and *Out* magazines, all \$3.95 each.

Finally, from AB CD's, Norm gives us the latest musical scoop:

Donna Summer will soon be releasing her first country album, recorded in Nashville. And get this: the album includes a duet with Liza Minnelli. (No, it's not "I'm a Little Bit Country, I'm a Little Bit Demerol"). Norm will keep us posted.

John Travolta is hot—again. Proof of this is that his musical endeavors from the 1970s are being re-released in a compilation CD. Aside from *Grease*, the John-man did some warbling during his Kotter days as a teen fave. But does it come with a wall poster?

Amplified Heart by Everything But the Girl has been one of AB CD's bestsellers and Norm is glad to see them catch on in mainstream airplay.

Boys For Pele by Tori Amos is another recommendation.

Soundtracks are in and Norm has *Leaving Las Vegas*, *Mr. Wrong*, *Beautiful Girls*, *Victor/Victoria* among others.

And last, George Michael's new full-length CD under his new contract should be in the store by the time you read this—his first in five years.

As always, these stores appreciate your business and suggestions.

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



Kevin Brian Wolf holding his nephew Garret.

KEVIN BRIAN WOLF

Died January 12, 1996

TRAVERSE CITY— Kevin Brian Wolf, 27, of Traverse City, died Friday from injuries sustained in an automobile accident.

A lifelong resident of the Grand Traverse area, he was the manager of Dillons Ice Cream in Traverse City and a sophomore at Northwestern Michigan College. He spoke both French and Spanish and was majoring in Spanish. He planned to be a Spanish instructor.



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.

He enjoyed music, walking and writing letters, and had many pen pals.

He was born November 10, 1968, in Grand Traverse County.

Surviving are his longtime companion, Jim Ingleson of Traverse City, and the Ingleson family who cared deeply for him; his mother, Virginia A. Wolf of Traverse City; his father, Brian R. Wolf of Kingsley; a sister, Shayeann F. Gensler of Traverse City; three nephews, Marcel, Garrot and Keagan Gensler; his maternal grandmother, Dorothy Wieland of Traverse City; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

Memorials may be given to the Kevin Brian Wolf Scholarship fund through Northwestern Michigan College.

January 15, 1996

Dear Kevin,

We say good-bye to those we love everyday... as when children leave for school... or when we say good-bye to a good friend who is leaving on vacation.

When we embrace and say "good-bye" and "I love you," as we are parting—it's not forever... but just for that moment...

If it should turn out that this would be the last time we would be together, how much better we would feel had we embraced and said "I love you."

Everyday that remains of my life, I will be thankful for those moments on Friday morning that we did... and our final phone conversation ending with our "I love you's" moments before you left forever...

Together we faced our life with it's sorrows and struggles and the many happy and joyous moments we shared... the everyday hugs and smiles, and all the little things that made our life together very special.

I do and always will love you! I will keep you alive in my thoughts and many memories, and with the love from both our families, but most of all, you will always be in my heart!

"Good-bye, I love you," — Jim

** This letter was read by our friend Patty O'Donnell at Kevin's Memorial Service on behalf of Jim Ingleson, on January 15, 1996.*

SUPERMAN & THE FLYING NUN

by Greg R. Baird

I believe that one of the greatest things that happened to me over a year ago was finding out that my older brother is gay. It not only saved our failing relationship with each other, but it helped us talk a lot about our childhood and growing up. Many of our phone discussions over the past year have been quite sincere and also very funny. One conversation in particular, still brings a smile to my face.

Show and Tell was a popular game that my brother and I would play when we were growing up. Since I was a little "Drama Queen" I enjoyed entertaining all of my parents' friends when they would come over to visit. Once they sat down on the old 1960's flowered sofa, the show began. Since I was the most outgoing and natural at acting, my brother, after a few failed attempts at trying to please the audience, would go to his room and construct, what would be the biggest show and tell ever. This would be his way of finally putting me in my place.

If you were like me at all, costumes played a big part of our playtime. I was 8 years old when I first experienced the magic of dressing up and being someone else. The hell with Show and Tell, I was (Ta Da!) Superman. With my outfit on, I could climb trees gracefully, use my x-ray vision (Too bad I don't have that now!) and beat my brother up. My friends thought I was cool and my parent's friends, sitting on the 1960s flowered sofa, said I was cute. All the time I was doing this, my brother Doug was in his room with the door locked making the ultimate show stopper.

On one particular balmy, summer evening, while my parents were hosting a party outside on the lawn, I decided to perform my feats of strength as Superman. After doing tricks like lifting our family dog over my head and throwing a rock over the top of the house, I decided my final act was to run across the back porch and jump over the railing. My brother of course had a front row seat.

With my red cape flapping behind me and my heart pounding, I jumped too late and landed smack dab on the railing breaking it in a million pieces and tearing my Superman outfit. I cried what seemed a thousand tears, going into my house to get cleaned up after my little show. All the time, my brother smiling and making plans to unleash his ultimate performance.

Two weeks later while having a casual, family picnic in the back yard. My brother tells us that he is going to fly off the back hill behind our house. My mother, in a very concerned way, asked how. My brother ran into the house and, moments later, returned, grasping in his hand an identical hat like the one Sally Field wore in the television show, "The Flying Nun". Let me tell you this thing was huge and had wings on it like a 747.

My parents and I laughed, but my brother swore that in moments he would be flying over the house like Sally Field. I thought at the time if he really could do this it would put my Superman show to shame. I ran into the house and came out with my camera and headed to the back hill with my brother. This was going to be a Kodak moment.

After some failed attempts of just jumping in mid-air, my brother thought that a running start would be best. Now picture if you will, two little gay boys out on a back hill, one with a huge old camera and the other with a 747 Nun's hat on. Here were the origins of my homosexuality!

With my parents and neighbors preparing for lift off, my brother ran as fast as he could across the top of the hill and... jumped off. The camera

SUPERMAN continued on page 16



TOLERANCE
LET'S MAKE IT A BETTER WORLD

T-SHIRT AVAILABLE HERE
100% NATURAL COTTON
ONLY \$12.95

JenTees
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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

N.W. MICHIGAN BEARS CLUB. A Bear Club is now being organized for bears and those who like them. For information, please write to PO BOX 283, Northport, MI 49670 (issue 3)

GAY GAMES IN 1998: Team Great Lakes is having an organizing meeting to plan for the upcoming games in Amsterdam, scheduled for August 1-5, 1998. Those interested, please call Ann Heler at 810-547-4692. The meeting is planned for March 16, 10:00 am at Affirmations in Ferndale. Team Great Lakes sent 180 individual athletes and teams to New York City in '94. (Issue 2)

BI-MONTHLY, BI-SEXUAL, WOMEN'S LUNCHEON: Meet the first and third Tuesday of each month, from 11:30 am until 1:00 at a local, Traverse City restaurant. Our next luncheon meetings are scheduled for March 5 and 19. Call Pamela at 922-0734 or contact Friends North. (issue 3)

WASHINGTON D.C. QUILT: I am putting together a group of people who are interested in going to Washington next 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 3)

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. We thank an anonymous donor from Traverse City and Philadelphia for this issue's cards. (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 3)

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION HAS MOVED to a new location in Petoskey, 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 4)

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 3)

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 3)

FRIENDS NORTH ANNUAL BIKE TOUR SCHEDULED: The weekend of biking and camping at spectacular Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore in Leelanau County, is planned for July 26-28. All those who like to bike, either long or short distances, should plan to attend. Last year, about 120 gays, lesbians and their friends, spent the weekend, which features bike rides on Saturday and Sunday, a catered dinner on Saturday night, a bit of beach time, a commemorative tee shirt, and people from all over the country. Reserve early, as this year the tour will most likely be sold out. Cost is \$70.00, or \$50.00 if payment is made before May 15. Contact Jeff at 616-271-3042 or Gretchen at 616-943-9819. If you would like information sent, please leave your name and address on the machine. (issue 3)

TWIN CITIES TO CHICAGO AIDS RIDE: Over 1700 riders plan to take part in this benefit ride (not race) between the two cities. Six days and 450 miles, the group will cycle through some of the most incredible scenery in the Midwest, while raising money for six AIDS service agencies in Chicago. July 1-6. Call 312-880-8812 to order a free color brochure. (issue 3)

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 3)

PERSONALS:

CHRISTIAN, LESBIAN, WOMAN committed to Jesus Christ offers bible study with fellowship and fun for likeminded 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 3)

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 3)

GLSTN, the Gay-Lesbian-Straight Teachers Network, is meeting monthly in Traverse City. Newly forming, they welcome all interested educators. The March meeting will be held on the 18th, at 7:00 pm, at Third Level, 1022 E. Front St. in T.C. For more information, call M'Lynn at 943-8800 or contact Friends North. (issue 2)

FRIENDS NORTH RAP GROUP is a group of men and women who get together monthly for lively discussion on a particular topic and a good time. Please consider joining them on the second Wednesday of each month, 7:30 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church, 349 Washington, T.C. Look for the Rap Group announcement elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter. (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 every third Wednesday of the month, at 7:30 pm. For more information call Cindy Robb at 271-5045. (issue 3)

WINDFIRE: This is a local youth support group for teens and others under 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 3)

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 calendar elsewhere in this newsletter for times and specific activities. (issue 3)

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. We're back running as a group for the winter again. All ages and abilities are welcome. (issue 2)

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 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 3)

THE PETOSKEY GROUP: A social group for lesbian, gay and bi-sexual persons is meeting weekly in Petoskey. The group meets at 7 p.m. Thursdays at the Park Garden Cafe on Lake Street. For information please contact Tim at 348-8151 or Zalmon at 348-5079. (issue 2)

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 3)

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 3)

GAY ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: Meetings for gays and lesbians are held each Saturday at 11:00 am 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 3)

SHARED LETTERS:

Ms. Karen Fenwick
President, PFLAG/DETROIT
Farmington, MI

Dear Ms. Fenwick:

I am writing in response to your letter dated January 19 in which you express concerns regarding Central Michigan University's response to the recommendations which members of PFLAG presented at the university's Board of Trustees meeting in November. We appreciate the support your organization is providing lesbian and gay students because we share your sincere desire for their well-being. The university has taken a number of actions, both before and after receiving these recommendations, which we believe address the concerns of PFLAG. They are presented below.

Recommendation One: "Make a non-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation as part of the Board of Trustees' policies and by-laws." The university's current AA/BO Presidential policy addresses sexual orientation. The university's Bulletin states "Central Michigan University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution, and resolves to encourage diversity and provide equal opportunity regardless of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation or other irrelevant criteria" (CMU Bulletin 1995-1996, p. 10) The Board of Trustees' policies on employment and housing currently are under review.

Recommendation Two: "Issue a strong statement condemning hate crimes at the university. Say in clear and unambiguous terms that such behavior is not tolerated and that immediate action will be taken." In a letter to the university community which was published in the November 10, 1995, issue of the campus newspaper CM LIFE, and shortly after in the community newspaper The Morning Sun, I stated very directly that CMU will not tolerate hate crimes. In addition, the Dean of Students is preparing a letter condemning sexual assault and

hate crimes which will be distributed widely to the university community.

Recommendation Three: "Provide campus-wide uniform and continuous education and sensitivity training for all students, faculty and staff." The university's Affirmative Action Officer provides training and educational programs on a continuing basis. Additionally, the Office of Gay and Lesbian Programs offers university-wide programs annually.

Recommendation Four: "Increase the budget of the Office of Gay and Lesbian Programs." A decision on the budget for the office will be made after the Assistant Vice President for Institutional Diversity, the person to whom this office reports, submits a complete plan and set of recommendations for the university's diversity efforts.

Recommendation Five: "Provide a "safe space" for gay and lesbian students which may include a lounge and information center." In response to the students' request, a private office in Sloan Hall has been provided to the registered student organization GLASS. This space is in addition to the already designated area for GLASS in the Student Organization Center.

Recommendation Six: "Establish a systematic review process and crisis intervention committee to respond to homophobic and anti-gay incidents" The university has implemented a Crisis Intervention Policy under which such incidents can be addressed.

Ms. Fenwick, I want to state once again that Central Michigan University is very concerned about the welfare of all its students. We continually strive to provide a collegial atmosphere where learning takes place within a community of diverse cultures, beliefs and personal orientations.

Sincerely,
Leonard E. Plachta, President



Ms. René A. Jeffries

Dear Ms. Jeffries:

Belated thanks for your letter of December 6 and your compliments on my speech to the Commonwealth Club of California. I appreciate your comments and your support.

Frankly, there is little, if any, federal prohibition on discrimination based on sexual orientation. In the Civil Rights Division, and elsewhere in the Administration, we feel very frustrated by this reality. In the last

SHARED LETTERS continued next page



**WE WILL BEAT ANY
WRITTEN ESTIMATE . . .
. . . GUARANTEED!**

Foreign & American Specialists

- Shocks
- Struts
- Brakes
- Converters
- Exhaust
- C.V. Joints
- Springs
- Rack & Pinion
- And More

2429 S. Airport Rd.
Traverse City, Michigan 49684
(616) 941-8803

Thomas J. LaForte
Manager

Free Inspection • Immediate Installation • Lifetime Guarantee

Congress, I gave testimony in support of a bill introduced to prohibit employment discrimination against gays and lesbians. That bill was reintroduced in this Congress and the President has again indicated his support. We are also very aware of the problem of "gay bashing" and are examining ways to address this within existing jurisdiction or through (possibly) new measures. We shall see.

It is quite clear that the struggles in the gay and lesbian communities for tolerance, fairness and equality, while different in important respects, share aspirations common to others often on the receiving end of discrimination — and I believe by all Americans of good faith. As a Nation, we may not yet be where we need to get to, but in the meanwhile, keep the faith.

Sincerely yours,
Deval L. Patrick—Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, DC 20035

Dear Editor of February's *Black and Gold*,

Last week I attended the talent show. I was amazed by the many talented students and impressed by their ability to perform in front of their peers despite some of the hecklers.

Unfortunately, portions of the last act stopped me cold and made me be very uncomfortable. I did not like the jokes about the Holocaust and gays. The slaughter of millions of Jews, gypsies and gays by the Nazis was an inhuman act. To make light of this great suffering is mean and points to a serious lack of sensitivity.

I have a sister who is gay. She struggled for several years to accept her sexuality and said her high school years were very difficult because she felt different. She endured in silence many negative comments about gays.

As the obnoxious anti-gay comments continued, I wondered about the adult supervision that allowed these jokes to be said. Teenagers still need guidance.

I think the writers and performers of these jokes need to examine their feelings about the Holocaust and homosexuality.

Humor is one form of communication and all communication sends a message. I hope the students involved in the last act will realize their jokes hurt, and resolve to be more sensitive in the future.

Sincerely, Mary Lee Pakieser MSN, RN, CS
(Reprinted from the February's *Black and Gold*, the newspaper of Traverse City High School)



COMMUNITY NOTES:

by Richard Tuxbury

TRAVERSE CITY:

Commendations go to Kevin Tarsa, John Evans, and Jeff Erno for sharing their views and their lives with Traverse City. On February 3rd, the TC Record-Eagle did a feature story on these three gay men and their connection to religion. It was written by Cathy Rafferty, and was given prominence on the Religion page.

Kevin is currently the director of music at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, having been raised a Catholic. Jeff attended Bible college, and eventually was not able to continue his program that would have led him to becoming a pastor. John is an ordained Episcopal priest, who has been retired for a few years, and has been openly gay for the last 25.



The February ski party and chili dinner saw a fun crowd of 40 get together in Suttons Bay at the Bahle Warming Hut. Organized by F.N. board member Jim Poole, the afternoon featured howling north winds, single-digit temperatures, lots of hot chili and chocolate, a gigantic walk-in fireplace, and a chance to meet new members of the community. Look for a repeat party next year, maybe at the same location.



Jim Carruthers has been working passionately at his coordinating job with Wellness Networks, and his work shows. Thanks to him and a small committee, combination social-fundraising events are happening.

The Wellness Benefit Auction was held on March 1st at Sidetraxx. This annual event was even better attended than last year, and all rooms of the nightclub were packed. With pledges as well as the auction itself, almost \$7,000. was raised. Support came in other areas too, with more people getting involved in Wellness because of this fun event.

The auction had items from local businesses as well as artists and crafters from the area. There was beautiful artwork, creative stained glass, metalwork, quilts, and a handmade oak table.

Brooke Borgeson-Gray emceed, while Laura Wilcock, the Karaoke Queen from Dils, played auctioneer. A wonderful selection of food was provided by Ron Harington, owner of Sidetraxx, and also by the Left Bank Cafe.

Also, in February, Jim organized a benefit breakfast event hosted and cooked by the VFW on Veterans Drive in T.C. For many members of the gay/lesbian community this was the first time they had ventured inside a VFW hall, and after they found the coast to be clear, entered to be fed a true midwesterner's breakfast of sausage, eggs, ham and pancakes. Half of each \$5.00 entry ticket was donated to Wellness Networks by the local VFW chapter.

Look for another event yet this month: Dillons Ice Cream in downtown T.C. is hosting a Wellness Ice Cream Social on Sunday, March 24th. Stop by for ice cream from 11 a.m. til 6 p.m.

HEAR... HERE!

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

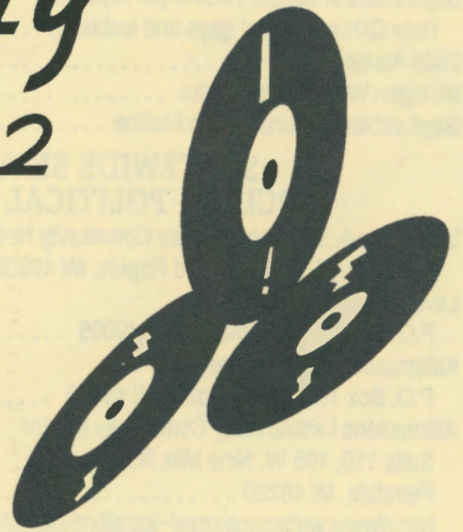
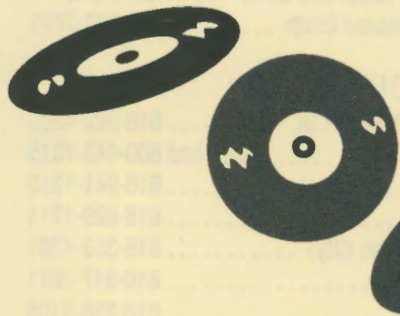
ABCD'S

A Better Compact Disc Store.

430 East Front Street / Traverse City / 946-2112

Disco Party

Friday March 22



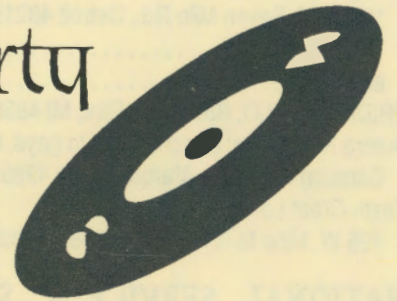
70's Music
70's Fashion
70's Attitude

SideTraxx is Northern Michigan's
Dance — Cruise
Video — Bar

St Patricks Day Party

Sunday, March 17

DJ Mike King 10-2



Proudly Gay Owned and Operated since 1989

SIDIE TRAXX

No Cover Fridays thru Winter '96

Monday is Womyn's Night

Saturday Cover is \$3.00

Tuesday is Men's Night

Open 7 Days - 6:00 pm

616 ▼ 935 ▼ 1666 ▶ 520 Franklin ▼ Traverse City, MI 49684

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 trijefm@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:

The Reverend 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, 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

Let's welcome Lev and Gersh back to T.C.! As you will see elsewhere in this newsletter, T.C. will soon have the two authors back to talk about their new book, *Coming Out of Shame*. Actually, the two-day event will be a workshop, with Lev Raphael and Gersh Kaufman leading the group discussions. It will be held at the Arts Center, an old and cozy clapboard building in the village of Leland.

YPSILANTI:

In a vote on January 23, the Eastern Michigan University Board of Regents added sexual orientation to its various non-discrimination policies. Five members voted in favor with one abstention. The approval marked the end of a persistent campaign by EMU students, faculty and staff. It also may mark the beginning of a new push to secure benefits for same-sex partners who are employed by the university.

A gay fraternity at EMU was granted official chapter status this year by its parent organization, Delta Lambda Phi. Founded in 1986, the national fraternity has about 20 chapters nationwide and 1000 members.

With sexual orientation as the common denominator, fraternity brothers represent a rainbow of backgrounds, making the group one of the most diverse frats at EMU. Members include foreign students, Asian-Americans, Latinos, blacks, whites, students from Wealthy Detroit suburbia, and Michigan farm communities and big cities.

SPRING LAKE:

A pastor who says that homosexuality is "not a defect, just a difference" faced scrutiny from the Reformed Church of America for that view. Although the large Spring Lake congregation stood behind the Rev. Richard Rhem, he was asked to leave his post by conservative church leaders.

About 600 members of Rhem's congregation signed a petition of support for this gentle and sensible man who had been with them for over 25 years. During an investigation by national church leaders, he was consistently given hugs and standing ovations by his church members.

The RCA considers homosexuality as contrary to the word of God, but urges compassion and pastoral concern for gays and lesbians. Rhem, by contrast, has said, "I consider homosexual orientation as part of the larger diverse pattern of creation..." This 'inclusive' philosophy got him the marching orders.

As of this writing, March 6th, it has been rumored that the congregation has decided to withdraw their church from the RCA. They would then ally themselves with another national church whose views were more in line with their own. Rev. Rhem would then stay on with his congregation.

BYRON CENTER

Gerry Crane, the gay music teacher who came out to his students last November, is under vicious attack by some members of the local community. Leaflets that target Crane are being put under car windshields at churches in the area.

In addition, a packet was mailed to every parent of a child who was enrolled in the Byron Center district. Included was a copy of the anti-gay video, "Gay Rights, Special Rights?" and a 100 page book titled "Setting the Record Straight," which uses shock techniques to describe gay sex. Another item was a letter that called for support in getting Gerry fired, and was signed by 25 community members and leaders.

The weight upon Gerry Crane is great right now, and this new development is extremely stressful. In addition, he faces teacher-parent conferences and an administration who would like him gone.

LITTLE TRAVERSE DIARY

Zalmon Sherwood

When I am feeling pessimistic about the future of the lesbian/gay rights movement, I try to focus on the positive aspects of our struggling community. This is not to deny that there are powerful forces at work, both from within and beyond our ranks, to undermine the little progress we have made. In fact, frequently the news is so bad (for example, Pat Buchanan's astonishing victories in the Republican primaries) that I become paralyzed with fear. It is during such a time that it is helpful, calming, therapeutic, to focus on something good and beautiful.

Which is why I turn to my friends, Bill and Howard. Early in April, they will celebrate their fortieth anniversary as a gay couple. They date their anniversary from the day they met, because, they say, that was the day their lives changed forever.

Bill and Howard provide a model for younger lesbians and gay men who seek to sustain long-term relationships. Finding a lover is one thing; making it work is quite another. I used to think that dating one man for more than two months was an accomplishment. But sharing your life with someone for a decade, a quarter century, forty years, creates an admirable bond that few of us have had the opportunity to experience.

One of the most controversial issues of the lesbian/gay rights movement is the concept of same-sex marriage. When I ask Bill and Howard if they consider themselves to be a married couple, they answer, "Yes." When I ask them if they would prefer to have their relationship recognized legally, they answer, "Absolutely."

Meanwhile, they live publicly as a gay couple. Although they are retired, they remain active in their community; they remain aware of current events; they contribute generously to gay and progressive causes; they encourage their younger gay friends who value their wisdom and experience.

I offered to host a party in their honor, because I believe forty years of commitment is something to celebrate. Instead, Bill and Howard prefer to spend their anniversary privately, perhaps replaying that romantic encounter of long, long ago that launched the love of a lifetime.

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

clicked, the Nun's hat blew off and my brother came crashing and rolling down the hill. My parents ran to his rescue.

My brother didn't fly that day. Actually, he ended up with a broken tail bone and, like Superman, embarrassed and upset that his ultimate performance was a failure. I really didn't think it was a total loss. Honestly, it was the ultimate performance. I didn't savor the fact that my brother got injured, but I must admit the whole scene was pretty amusing. On our way to the hospital, I promised my brother that I would leave the life as a super hero if he would not try to fly again. He agreed.

I have looked back on that comical time in my life and have been very thankful. Our creative imagination and childhood innocence are something we should always keep and value. Even though all of us have matured and gotten older, its our dreaming and imagination that fuels our soul. It's often these qualities that pulls us through when it seems the world dislikes us or refuses to listen to us because we are gay. When it is all said and done, we are all superheroes.

UNTITLED

Joe Morgan

As I light three candles
(gifts from the man with the most beautiful soul)
acknowledge my weakness
invoke the spirits in my own voice for the first time
to finally recognize the Signs they have given me
which will lead me to the peace
my body and soul need to grow,
I take the hand of the spirit
place one thought in front of the other
and retrace my journey.

A solitary child had been crying since he was born
mourning the incompatibility of his physical and spiritual
a reflection of the soul crying out
for an initiation by the wise ones
who have fallen asleep in the shadow of the machine.

"Mama! I need..."
I feared the ones who taunted me
for looking like a boy and acting like a girl.

They were the offspring of those
who, in the name of "God,"
invented or blessed the invention of the machine
the one that casts the shadow.

"Dad! I want..."
I was angry with the ones who exposed me to life and death
and couldn't show me Life and Death.

"Somebody! Anybody! Where are my teachers?"

"They are sleeping,"
replied my weak and gender-balanced soul
"Listen to me."

"Your heart speaks the truth
and the truth will set you free.
Loving and receiving love is not a crime.
You are beautiful.
Life and Death are both beginnings.
They are beautiful."

From the pain I grew stronger
but I only trimmed the week of evil with my earthly senses
I tasted of pure foods and water
touched the Earth lightly
watched life directed by the sun
and listened to music
all the while leaving the roots unharmed.

"Child" calls the voice of my mother now
"take this hoe with me
and let us sabotage the roots of the machine
cause it to wither
and dispel its shadow."
"Together" she says
"we shall wake my mother and her mother and her mother
call them to a sacred place
ask them for their guidance
and listen to their wisdom."

Our ancestors speak to me with sad but hope-filled eyes
"Take the hands of your brother and sister
and labor to clean the world from
its paralyzing epidemic of soul-barrenness
so that tomorrow you can walk together in peace."

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.

PROFILE; MCCORMICK & MOLNAR

by—John Evans

"We've always wanted to play brothers, because people tell us we look like brothers."

Matt McCormick and Guy Molnar will get their wish in the upcoming musical at the Old Town Playhouse, "Secret Garden".

"We get to sing this magnificent duet together... It is the best song in the show!"

Guy went on to say how often when they walk into a store or a restaurant the sales clerk or waiter will ask, "You two brothers?" And they just say "yes". (When, of course, the correct reply is "No, we're sisters!")

Matt and Guy met at the Old Town Playhouse in early 1991 when Matt was auditioning for a play which Guy was directing. He was given the male lead.

"I fell in love with him while I was directing the play... He didn't know I existed. At least that's what I thought." (Matt uttered a sinister little snicker at this point)

Guy has been living in the Grand Traverse area since January 1990 when he came up from South Carolina to be a hall counselor at Interlochen Arts Academy.

With a bachelor's degree in music and biochemistry, he had gone to medical school for two years.

"I hated it, so I quit and got a master's degree in piano performance in New York City. But I realized eventually that I didn't want to finish a doctorate. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do so I moved back to Charleston, SC. I got wiped out by Hurricane Hugo... lost the place where I worked and lost the place where I lived."

While he was living temporarily with his parents in Carolina the call came through from IAA for the counselor job and he was in Michigan in a matter of a few days.

Matt came to the area in 1988 from Flint where he had been working only eight months. A friend encouraged him to interview for a job with Traverse, the Magazine which he did. Within a few days he had a job offer and moved to Traverse City in August that year. He stayed with the magazine until last August. He is now working with Alitho Graphics.

While at the magazine, a co-worker who had done some acting, suggested they go down to the Playhouse and get involved. "I thought this would be a great way to meet people. I've always wanted to act, but never thought I could do it. I wanted to get involved behind the scenes. We did props for "Sweeny Todd" in the spring of 1989. And then when they had auditions for "Biloxi Blues", I auditioned and got a part, and that sort of unleashed this passion that I had buried for so long."

Matt had roles, major and minor, in most of the plays after that. Guy was involved with many of them. Jeffrey was the first play in which they both had roles. Producing, directing, set design, and acting - both men have filled those jobs at various times over the past five years.

My first awareness of Guy was at the Michigan Ensemble Theater production of The Fantastics.

"That was a pretty bizarre experience. They asked both of us to understudy the show because they didn't have any understudies.

About a day or two after we agreed to do that there was a dust-up between the producer and the male lead and they fired him and called me at one in the morning and said will you take this part and I hadn't even had a rehearsal. I learned the part in two days and went on."

Guy's two years in medical school came through for him: "I learned to assimilate huge amounts of information in a short time. I wasn't able to do that

before. I don't think it's an innate ability. I think it is a learned skill... You just had to do it. You had to cover so much ground so quickly, and that has stayed with me."

Matt did his studies at Northern Michigan University where he got a degree in graphic design and commercial photography. That prepared him not only for the job as art director on Traverse, the Magazine, but also for designing sets for many of the productions at the Playhouse.

During this period of education Matt was seeing his high school sweetheart whenever time and distance permitted. They became engaged to be married but eventually broke up.

"That was a rough thing. I still feel real guilt about that because she is such a wonderful person and I just love her to death. She's getting married this June. But the thing that was hard for me personally was - Well, I'm the golden boy of the family on top of everything else. Compared to my brothers and sisters - they're not rogues or anything, but I'm the only one who has gone to college, and my parents never liked any of the people my brother or sisters have married, and here I come with this wonderful girl whom they just worshipped. So when we announced our engagement they were overjoyed. Then when I broke it off, I couldn't give a reason except that I didn't want to be married - I didn't know that I was gay... I suspected it but I couldn't even face it at this time."

Guy interjected: "That's why when we met I was so depressed. I was falling in love with this guy and I couldn't get any kind of read on him. Couldn't tell if he was gay or not. One night we all went out to Mabel's after rehearsal and at some point he mentioned that he had once been engaged but had called it off. And I thought, AH, there's hope!!"

Guy didn't know he was gay until his early twenties.

"I had had a couple of relationships with women but I came to realize that I was gay. I did have one pretty serious relationship when I was in graduate school with William. William broke up with me in



*McCormick & Molnar
(This shot is 'November' from their up-
and coming calander [well not really but
it's a good idea])*

a particularly callous and insensitive way - over the phone. The reason that the end of the relationship was so devastating to me was because I was so emotional and was always desperate for some sort of connection and with William I had really taken my time and been so careful and still got my heart stomped on. That was what led me to come out to my parents. They were just about the only two people that didn't know. They were still trying to fix me up with eligible women."

The first person Matt came out to was Guy.

"We never really dated. We saw each other socially after the play that I directed. We got to know each other more and more and became fairly good friends but we were not what I would have called close until he came out to me. About a week after that we had dinner together and that was it."

As the interview continued we spent a good deal of our time together talking about relationships in general and what makes them work. A certain degree of independence was one element we felt was necessary. Also, the readiness to talk when differences arise.

Guy commented: "People can never believe us when we say we've never fought - we don't argue... One of the reasons we were drawn to each other is that we're not fighters. Both of us are very pacifistic and diplomatic. And would much rather talk about things than get in a huff."

Matt: I can count on one hand my whole life when I have raised my voice. Yelling or arguing - I don't see the point. Something always happens when you do that. You end up saying something you wish you hadn't... You can't take it back.

Guy: It took me a while to learn how to be angry when I am angry. But I think both of us are also good communicators and we learned how to say what needs to be said without getting out of control.

Guy admitted that he is learning from his boss at the OTP how to have an argument!

Another reason their relationship works is that they have a good balance between their work lives and lives together. Also, each has his own friends and they have friends in common.

Matt: "And enough similar interests that we can do things together such as gardening, or whatever, but our interests are also different enough that I can pursue something on my own.

Guy: He's so passionate about photography. And I'm not big on pictures. They're great to look at but I never think about taking them. And I still have to get used to the fact that he always has a camera with him.

The doorbell rang and an expected visitor joined us. We soon wrapped it up. I came away from this interview inspired and strengthened by these two men and their unique relationship. They manifest that combination of strength and gentleness that cannot be characterized as either masculine or feminine, but simply human.



Computer Service and Upgrades
Custom Systems Available
Daniel Chapman, Consultant / Technician
334 River St.
Manistee, MI 49660
(616) 723-6422 Fax: (616) 723-7140

HIGH SCHOOL SERVES LESBIAN, GAY AND TRANSGENDERED STUDENTS

By M'Lynn Hartwell

At first glance, it seems like any other high school classroom. Students are scribbling notes in science workbooks as a teacher hovers over them, correcting mistakes. Blackboards list assignments, and posters on the wall mark the historical achievements of gays, women, blacks, Latinos and others.

Suddenly, one pupil clutches his stomach and complains about nausea from a dose of AZT, a drug used to combat AIDS. A friend nods sympathetically across the room, and the teacher inquires gently about the boy's condition.

"It's just one more problem we face here," says the instructor, after the teenager has left the room. "When you run a school like this, you're dealing with a very special group of folks."

At the Harvey Milk alternative school, a three-story building on the fringes of Greenwich Village, New York, the phrase "teen-age years" takes on a new meaning. Founded in 1985, it is the nation's only public school for gay, lesbian and transgendered students.

For most American adolescents, high school is a time of social growth, sexual awakening and intellectual blossoming. But it can be a traumatic experience for gays and lesbians, some of whom are harassed by students and teachers and drop out of mainstream schools.

The Harvey Milk School, named after the gay San Francisco supervisor who was assassinated in 1978, is a refuge for such teenagers. A recent survey of the student body showed that more than 58 percent of them had been beaten up by their peers and feared that they would never be able to complete their education.

"We're talking about kids who have been humiliated and ostracized, and for whom there is no other place to go," says Joyce Hunter, a licensed social worker with the Hetrick-Martin Institute for Lesbian and Gay Youth, which set up the school with the cooperation of New York City officials.

Hunter tells of a 15-year old boy who dropped out of a New York City high school after a physical-education instructor berated him in front of other students and ordered him to sit in the girl's gymnasium. A 14-year old lesbian, weary of being harassed by her peers, stopped going to school and told counselors that she felt safer hanging out on street corners than spending time in the schoolyard.

On a typical day at the Harvey Milk School, 15 to 20 students attend classes, out of a total yearly enrollment of 40 or so. Attendance is erratic, given the pupils' histories and their fears about rejoining a school routine. Potential students are referred by a variety of social agencies, and administrators decide who will be admitted. Although pupils of all sexual orientations are welcome, only a few heterosexuals have ever enrolled.

For most of the teenagers, the overriding problems are not algebra or physics, but isolation and self-doubt. During a recent creative-writing class, one Harvey Milk student wondered whether he would ever be able to fully express his gay identity in straight society. "I don't think I fit in anywhere," he said. "I don't know where the line is that I shouldn't cross. Maybe I'll always be alone." Another student, wearing a bright red bandanna, answered him, saying: "If you wanted to fit in, you'd be wearing a three-piece suit and going to work on Wall Street every day for a stockbroker. But that's not who you are."

FEEDBACK:

Well, I plunked down my \$15 and ordered a copy of "The Gay Agenda," the anti-gay videotape produced by The Report, a multimedia anti-gay organization (you know, "know thine enemy..."). It wasn't nearly as outrageous as I expected, but it is brilliantly produced, aimed at a very specific target audience. It includes interviews with a psychologist who "cures" gays, two "ex-gays," and a couple other "experts," all telling us how frightening gays are, how obsessed with sex they are, etc. There's also footage of gay pride parades, protests, and demonstrations, focusing from time to time on little kids in the marches (of course).

What struck me the most was that most of what they were showing didn't seem that extreme to me — lots of drag, lots of men in g-strings, signs that said "Fuck," people dancing suggestively and miming sex acts, some women with bared breasts. And the experts talk about how gays practice oral sex (gasp!) and anal sex (double gasp!), etc. Of course, they also talk about "golden showers," fisting, and scatting.

But when I thought about who the video's target audience was, I realized how incredibly well-done the thing was. It played to every fear

"You don't have to see God as straight, white and a man."



"I hadn't been going to church for five years, because I couldn't believe in anything. I wanted something I could relate to as a woman. A lesbian woman."

"It was the same for both of us. Walking into a Unitarian Universalist service and feeling immediately at home. We felt welcome. We didn't have to be different people—we could be ourselves."

"We could be together... a couple. And no one was going to kick us out."

"It goes way, way beyond tolerance. Unitarian Universalists encourage diversity. And acceptance."

"I mean, not everyone is Ozzie and Harriet, you know?"

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

for the location of a congregation near you, call:

1-800-464-0336

and sexual hang-up that older, middle-American small-town folks have. The most amusing part was the descriptions of "disgusting" gay practices like S&M, etc., that are just as prevalent in the straight community. Of course, they don't mention that straight people do this stuff, too. Whoever wrote and produced the video really knew what they were doing.

Also with the video I got a list of their other videos that you can buy:

"The Gay Agenda" (\$15) - The documentary that sent shockwaves through the Pentagon. Experts examine the impact of the homosexual movement from various perspectives: legal, medical, psychological, political, and sociological.

"The Ultimate Target of the Gay Agenda - Same Sex Marriage" (\$20) - Gay activists are now setting their sights on perhaps the most crucial "prize" of their movement - same sex marriage. "The Ultimate Target..." examines all facets of this most critical of issues and arms concerned citizens with the power of knowledge and understanding essential for effectively combating this profoundly dangerous campaign.

"Stonewall: Twenty-Five Years of Deception" (\$15) - This investigative documentary traces the history of gay activism and uncovers the inner workings of homosexual organizations. What consequences will society face, if their well-organized, well-funded campaign goes unchallenged?

"The Gay Agenda in Public Education" (\$15) - Why are homosexual activists suddenly so interested in a safe sex curriculum? Is it genuine concern that is motivating them, or is their sudden interest merely a smoke-screen designed to desensitize to the dangers of the homosexual life-style? Are children being taught responsible behavior, and the real health risks associated with promiscuity and perversion, or are these important items replaced with lessons on how to tolerate perverted behavior as being merely different, not deadly?

"The March on Washington" (\$15) - See the March on Washington that you did not see on your local or national news coverage. Find out how the media is no longer reporting, but promoting the homosexual lifestyle. Who really is marching for civil rights? When the homosexuals were trying to put their best foot forward they still behaved bizarrely. This video is approximately 15 minutes long and is very shocking and thought provoking.

"Gay Pride" (\$15) - With society's growing concern over the excesses of homosexual behavior, it might have been expected that 1993's Gay Pride Parades would have been toned down, if anything, the images captured by The Report's camera are more shocking than those seen in "The Gay Agenda."

"Civil Rights or Crisis in America" (\$15) - Reveals a graphic modern day Sodom and Gomorrah; viewer discretion is advised. Shows Gay activists protesting in the streets after the veto of the Gay Rights bill, etc.

"AIDS: The Unnecessary Epidemic" (a book, \$18.95) - American Under Siege, the frightening story of how the AIDS and Gay lobbies have been able to prevent physicians from monitoring or controlling this epidemic.

To order any of these call 800-462-4700. You know these videos are going to be all over the place in this election year. We need to know what we're up against. - From Chaz 64@AOL.COM

MESSAGE OF HOPE FOR SEXUAL MINORITY

By Amy Adams Squire Strongheart

Adam Rosen is a teenager who probably has learned more about life and humanity in his brief 17 years than most of us learn in twice that time. That's because Adam is gay, and being young and gay during the reign of Newt Gingrich and Ralph Reed forces reality on you prematurely. For Adam, this has been a positive experience.

The day we chatted, he was breathless with gratitude for past experiences and enthusiasm for future possibilities, stumbling over his words in his haste to share his message of hope for other gay youths.

Adam is one of three co-hosts for the radio show, "Gay 90s." "It is the only show in the country devoted entirely to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered young people. Not even New York or San Francisco has one!" exclaimed Adam, obviously proud of the work he and his colleagues are doing.

"We hope to help others like us, who have few resources for coming out as gay people. I was fortunate in that I was able to find a number of library books on same-sex orientation and read them on my own, but a lot of kids are too frightened to search out the support or don't know where to start. On the show, we want to help those kids find the resources. For upcoming broadcasts we are going to offer book reviews of gay or gay-themed books and inform listeners of help available through the computer.

"Our program is very important, I know this because after we did our show on the suicide of gay teens, we got so many calls and letters from gay and straight youth alike, saying how necessary it is to keep people informed about how isolated gay kids can be in our culture to let them know that they aren't alone."

In 1989, under the Bush-Quayle administration, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued a report on youth suicide. The report concluded that lesbians and gay youths accounted for approximately one-third of youth suicides and that suicide was the leading cause of death among gay male, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual youth.

Knowing from my own experience of adolescence how easy it is to become morose from lack of affirmation and a sense of belonging, I asked Adam if he had ever considered suicide.

"Well, I've basically always been optimistic, but my coming out was still very turbulent. I was depressed. Since I love music, I just threw myself into my music studies. I saw the movie "Amadeus" and I even started writing my own requiem. But I never attempted suicide. I just ignored myself for a long time."

"When I finally came out to my parents, I was lucky because they were supportive, unlike some of my friends' parents. My mom said she "always knew" because in elementary school and junior high I kept getting pushed, shoved, and hit for being different. Mom would go to school and get it sorted out, but the cycle would always start over again. My dad is a clinical psychologist and is very proud of me."

"Growing American Youth is a great support group. I've been attending for over a year now. We meet every week and talk about how we're doing. Sometimes we have speakers or projects. We usually read about some prominent gay person or event in gay history. This helps us

keep in touch with our roots. I've learned that one of the best ways to eradicate a group of people is to take away their history.

"An organization like this helps give sexual minority kids a sense of belonging, which is very important because lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered youth are so isolated. After meetings a lot of times, we just hang out and have coffee like other kids. Being part of this group has helped me be able to socialize normally. I actually had to learn to be part of a group."

The day I finished my interview with Adam, I learned that state Senator John Russell, a Republican from Lebanon [MO] had introduced Senate Bill 600, which would make the use of any so-called pro-homosexual materials in Missouri public schools illegal. Any pamphlet, book, or poster that has a positive message about persons with a same-sex orientation would be banned. References to homosexuality in conjunction with instruction on AIDS/HIV would be allowed, naturally.

Adam told me about a friend who was consistently assaulted at school for being gay. Administrators insisted that the problem was the young man's sexual orientation and not the homophobic bravado of his classmates. The student was forced to leave his high school and enroll in another one.

Legislation such as SB 600 encourages such violence, alienation, and transience. By ensuring through force of law that gay kids would be rendered invisible or seen only in the false light of disease and perversion, approximately 10 percent of our nation's most valuable resource will be put in harm's way.

Sadly, not all sexual minority youths are able to overcome the odds and find their way as well as Adam has. Although many do carve their niche in the world, contributing to the good of society through their service, art, and parenting, many succumb to the lure of oblivion through drugs, alcohol, and suicide.

In 1983, 20-year-old Bobby Griffith managed a back flip off an overpass into the path of an oncoming tractor trailer. Bobby knew from the age of 15 that he was gay, but his family and religion had imparted to him that being gay was a sin. It was a conflict for which he could find no resolution, except to deny himself in the most literal way possible.

A month before he plunged to his death, Bobby wrote in his journal: "My life is over as far as I'm concerned. I hate living on this Earth. I think God must get a certain amount of self-satisfaction watching people deal with the obstacles he throws in their path. I hate God for this and for my existence."

[EDITOR NOTE: Amy Adams Squire Strongheart is a journalist at the ST. LOUIS POST DISPATCH and this is a reprinted COMMENTARY, published on February 2. She is online at CAStnght@AOL.COM]



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

AT SUNDANCE, THE MOVIES ARE ABOUT LESBIANS

PARK CITY, UTAH - Lesbians, paint-sniffing trailer trash, and psycho killers - that was the bill of fare, or at least part of it, at this year's Sundance Film Festival.

Spurred by the art-house successes of "Go Fish" and "The Incredibly True Adventures of Two Girls in Love," a bumper crop of lesbian films were prominently featured in this year's showcase - including "Late Bloomer," a comedy about a lesbian wedding; "Everything Relative," described as a lesbian slant on "The Big Chill"; "Tender Fictions," a documentary by Barbara Hammer; and "Bound," a lesbians-vs.-the Mob thriller with Jennifer Tilly as a sexy Mafia chick and Gina Gershon (the "Showgirls" femme fatale) as the ex-con who pulls her into a \$2 million heist.

Lesbian characters also pop up in "Precious"... "Freeway"... and "Losing Chase," the big-screen directing debut of actor Kevin Bacon, which pairs Helen Mirren with Bacon's wife, Kyra Sedwick.

The best film I've seen while movie-hopping is "The Celluloid Closet," the gays-in-cinema documentary by San Franciscans Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman, which could bring Epstein his third Oscar. (By Edward Guthmann, SF Chronicle)

FREEDOM NOT TO MARRY KIT

Recently, I was reading one of the many glossy gay magazines I get. There's a sentence you never used to hear. No more plain brown wrappers for us! The only magazine I insist come under wraps into my neighborhood is "The New Republic."

Now, all manner of gay magazines with "out" in the title are mailed openly to post office boxes all over the country. "Out and About" - gay travel. "Trout" - gay sports trolling. "Doubt" - a magazine for bisexuals. "Pout" - The Log Cabin newsletter (great article about Bob Dole returning gay money).

And OK, I wasn't really reading. I was looking at the pictures. We've got pictures! Famous gay people. Famous dead, suspected gay people. Famous gay half sisters playing ministers at gay weddings on hip, gay-friendly shows. Gay cruises to take. Gay things to buy. In between the ad for gay real estate and gay colonics ("Swallow a

prism, shit a rainbow!"), I spotted an ad for "The Freedom to Marry Kit". Of course, I wondered, "Who is Kit?" And why do we want to marry her? Or him?"

It was a very androgynous "Ask Pat" moment. I could understand the Freedom to Marry Melissa. Or the Freedom to Marry Martina, with very clear, signed prenuptial agreements, of course, but this Kit thing had me mystified.

Turns out the FTM kit is designed to help concerned gays organize in their municipalities for the freedom to marry! Now if I were into handicapping, sorry, predicting the next issue for gay people to get het up about, it would not have been gay marriage.

I would have thought our issue would be violence against gays - witness the murder in Oregon of two known lesbian activists. Investigators think the motive was robbery. Like rainbow-colored freedom rings are hard to come by.

Or I would have predicted we would be organizing around the Supreme Court's upcoming ruling on the Colorado amendment, or at least having a small action to protest that the Clinton Administration did not even see fit to file an amicus brief.

I would have thought we would have been out in the streets over health care, given the cost of caring for people living with AIDS and the disproportionately high rates of breast cancer among lesbians.

But no, the issue du anno burbling up in the gay movement is the Freedom to Marry. Go figure.

I have applied rigorous self-criticism to understand why this issue does not exactly knock the dots off my dice. It's not the first time I have had to work up enthusiasm for a gay issue.

Gays in the military was a challenge. Instead of thinking that I was enthusing about gay guys convincing their dads that they were man enough to kill other men, I got there by thinking of it as a jobs program. Not full steam. Think vaporizer.

I have examined my reluctance to hop on the gay bandwagon with the "Just Married" sign and tin can tails rattling up the street. Of course I believe that gay people should have the right to marry, and have equal access to all benefits accruing to straight married people, but for myself, I prefer living in sin.

The freedom not to marry was always one of the things I enjoyed about being gay. So was the freedom not to have children. Because so many gay people are having children - they definitely have that thrill-seeking gene - it follows that they would want the civil protections of marriage for those children.

Don't get me wrong. I will take any thing which gets new gay



Barker Creek Nursery

LANDSCAPING AND GARDEN CENTER

Tom Hager
(616) 267-5972

7038 M-72 N.W., Williamsburg, MI 49690

Whitewater Landscaping & Lawn Care
Gordon Coy
(616) 267-9451

CURTIS DESK TOP PUBLISHING

- Catalogs -
 - Circulars -
 - Booklets -
 - Brochures -
 - Business Cards -
 - Business Forms -
 - Announcements -
 - Fliers -
 - Menus -
 - Tickets -
 - Resumes -
 - Invitations -
 - Newsletters -
 - Letterheads -
- WORD PROCESSING, TYPE SETTING
PAGE LAYOUT, GRAPHICS
& DESIGN SERVICES
- RICHARD CURTIS**
proprietor

1969 S. Airport Rd.
Traverse City, MI

941-2298
Fax: 941-1158

people incensed, interested, involved in the gay movement. I'm just having a very Peggy "Is That All There Is?" Lee moment.

It's hard to be gay and a people pleaser. This FTM mini-movement seems to be fueled by a desire to show that we can be upstanding citizens, with children, and that we will keep sex within the confines of marriage. As if.

Instead of spending time on the freedom to marry, I think we should try to talk straight people out of getting married. It's not going well for them: Enid/Joe; Nicole/O.J.; Di/Chuck/Camilla; Lisa Marie/Michael. This would certainly cut down on a whole range of civil-service jobs. See, I'm doing my best to balance the budget.

If there had been this freedom to marry when I was a child, would it have meant that I would not have had to hide crushes? If it meant that I could go home and say to my Irish-Catholic mother, "Oh, Mom, I just met the most dreamy girl! I asked her to an Earth, Wind, and Fire concert and she said yes!" And my mother would joyfully say, "Oh, honey, that's wonderful. What do you love about her? Will you practice safe sex? Oh, no Wait, you can't until you are married."

If, big if, that is the net trickle-down effect of the Freedom to Marry movement, I'll stop saying "married" instead of "marred" as soon as I get my multi-colored FTM card. I've got to register my china pattern: gold-leaf entwined women's symbols on a purple background. (from THE PROGRESSIVE, March, 1996, UNPLUGGED by KATE CLINTON)

GLAAD NEWS

GAY & LESBIAN ALLIANCE AGAINST DEFAMATION, INC.

Gay and Lesbian Group Picks Favorite Pix, TV Series

by Ted Johnson

HOLLYWOOD—"Boys on the Side," "Carrington," "Home for the Holidays" and "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar," were nominated as the best studio films by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.

GLAAD has handed out nods since 1989 to recognize outstanding media coverage of gays and lesbians.

The group will announce the winners during its' Media Awards on March 7 at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York, and March 10 at the Century Plaza.

Nominated for TV series were "Courthouse," "Friends," "NYPD Blue," "Party of Five" and "Sisters."

The group announced award winners in other categories. "The Incredibly True Adventures of Two Girls in Love" was named outstanding independent film and "Serving in Silence: The Margarethe Cammermeyer Story" won outstanding TV film.

Other winners: daytime TV, "All My Children"; documentary, "Ballot Measure 9"; TV documentary, "The Question of Equality"; magazine, Glamour; album, Boy George, "Cheapness and Beauty"; song, Jill Sobule, "I Kissed a Girl"; comic strip, "Maggie Sawyer, Special Crimes Unit"; Los Angeles theater, "End of the World Party"; and New York Theater, "A Language of Their Own."

Sidney Sheinberg, former president of MCA, will be given the special Vanguard Award for his leadership in lesbian and gay equal rights.

Barbara Walters will get the Excellence in Media Award for her coverage of gay and lesbian issues; including her interview with Greg Louganis; and "The Celluloid Closet" will get the special Vito Russo Film Award. The documentary, about portrayals of gays and lesbians in film, is based on Russo's book.

GLAAD also will give a special award to M.A.C. Cosmetics for advertisements using RuPaul and transgender images.

Crossing Boundaries

A recent candlelight vigil in Washington DC for Tyra Hunter, the transgendered person who died last August 7th, served to bring together a broad constituency of communities. Protesters say Hunter was allowed to bleed to death, after a car accident, when medical rescuers ceased giving assistance upon discovering Hunter was a transgendered person. Jokes were made, and the medics were heard laughing. Subsequently, Hunter died in DC General Hospital.

Cathy Renns, co-chair of the DC Chapter of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, said, "I have never seen a cause that crossed so many boundaries: gay and straight, black and white." The vigil drew more than two hundred demonstrators, and included everyone from local residents to activists, as well as men in suits and men in drag. Hunter's tragic death has outraged a myriad of groups.

Fire officials deny that the medics stopped assisting Hunter, although they do admit a derogatory comment was made by one technician. The outcry from the public regarding Hunter's treatment has caused the fire department to re-open its investigation. In addition, pressure from various groups helped to initiate sensitivity training for fire department workers. The department is attempting to correct its mistreatment of minorities and gay people.

The Washington Post covered the vigil, and the circumstances surrounding it, with balanced accuracy.

We Deliver

The United States Postal Service has implemented a new personnel policy regarding discrimination against gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered employees. Post Master General Marvin Runyon issued the following statement: "The Postal Service is

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)





committed to ensuring a workplace that is free of discrimination... We recognize and value our diverse workforce and are committed to the fair treatment of all employees. Harassment and disparate treatment based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or identity will not be permitted or condoned in the Postal Service." The USPS Diversity Office in DC said they announced the policy on August 31st of last year.

A non-profit organization that struggles for this and other anti-discrimination statutes is the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, Inc. (ICTLEP), which is headquartered in Houston. After hearing of the USPS policy, ICTLEP Executive Director, Phylis R. Frey, commented, "I believe that the 'or identity' language along with the 'or perceived language was probably designed to cover the transgender community."

New Domestic Partner Benefits "From the Ground Up"

Beginning January 1, 1996, Kaiser Permanente will extend domestic partner benefits to all of its employees and physicians, who number over 70,00, in both the Northern and Southern California regions. Benefits will be available to any couple, whether the two people are of same or different genders. The couple will have to meet the usual domestic partner requirements.

Kaiser Permanente is one of the larger companies in the United States to implement such an employee benefit.

FOUR MINISTERS TALK TO LOCAL P-FLAG

staff writer

Forty-five people are crowded into a Sunday School classroom in the basement of Grace Episcopal Church on a rainy Wednesday night to listen to four local ministers.

THE TOPIC: The Bible, homosexuality and where their churches stand on the issue.

THE MINISTERS: Emmy Lou Belcher, from the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Grand Traverse; Ed Emheiser, Grace Episcopal; Joe Kelly, Friends of the Light; and Geraldine Colvin, Unity Church.

Religion and HIV status are the two biggest issues parents of gays and lesbians have, says Jeff Erno, a P-FLAG member who organized this panel.

Before the panel begins, local P-FLAG president Cindy Robb plays two television ads sponsored by the national P-FLAG. Very few stations nationwide will air them. The ads link anti-gay religious rhetoric to two major forms of violence for gays and lesbians.

One ad shows a teen-age girl committing suicide; the other a teenage boy being chased and killed by a gang of other boys, while religious right leaders Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson thunder that homosexuality is an abomination, according to the Bible.

"It just appalls me that that can come out of the same Book I have read and that has been part of my journey," says the Rev. Ed Emheiser from Grace, referring to the ministers in the two videos. "And that's very painful to me to say. Yes, I am Christian and so is that because it is so far

from what I believe."

Scripture, he said, is to build people up, help them grow, nurture them, to be true to their lives and to celebrate who they are and "not have to live in hiding."

"Scripture is not to be used to destroy people, to separate people, to denigrate people—and that's what I find so, so appalling.

"If we look at the Scriptures, what are we going to be fundamentalist about?" he asked. "You know, handicapped people in the Old Testament were said to be outside the pale, to say nothing about the role of women."

He pointed to the passages about Sodom and Gomorrah—a favorite used by anti-gay religious leaders. The issue in that story was hospitality, not homosexuality, he said. And in those passages, Lot offered his daughters to the angry crowd.

"There are many passages like that where it says it's fine to abuse, to murder women," Emheiser said. "You can use Scripture for whatever you want to use it for, yet people hone in on gays and use that to destroy and abuse many people who are trying to be faithful Christians."

The issue of homosexual marriage ceremonies and ordination of gay and lesbian priests is a big one now in the Episcopal Church. The presiding bishop has said there will be no outsiders in the church, but marriages and ordination are still not authorized.

For the Unitarian-Universalists, homosexuality is not an issue, The Rev. Emmy Lou Belcher said. It has openly gay and lesbian clergy and its ministers also perform same-sex union ceremonies.

But, U-U didn't get where it is today without a lot of internal strife similar to what is happening today in many denominations.

"We just did it earlier," she said.

Her general attitude about the Scriptures is that they contain important truths about living and life, but also are time- and culture-bound.

"Many of the things that are attributed to be anti-homosexual were not so in terms of the times people were talking about," she said. "I think someone needs to know about the history of the time of the Scripture."

"Scriptures are not the end of revealed truth," she said. "We believe in continual revelation, which means that things change. We understand more. We think differently and do differently and are not meant to stay in 4000 B.C."

The Rev. Geraldine Colvin said Unity doesn't take an official stand on homosexuality and it's not an issue in the church.

She said the question that comes up for her when she hears religious leaders condemn homosexuality is "What is their concept of God."

"So much of what is our concept of God comes back to our concept of guilt, fear and sense of self-esteem," she said. "In the Old Testament, it's interesting to me that the worst, most negative characteristics of human beings are attributed to God—the vengeful, wrathful, hateful God. It is not until we get to the New Testament and the teachings of Jesus that we can shed light on the Scriptures."

A lot of abusive things are done with the Scriptures in churches across the world, she said.

"The Scripture that stands out to me is that Jesus said, Ye are the Light of the World. And he never said that excluding anybody."

Joe Kelly, the Friends of the Light minister, said he could not speak for the Quakers, but only for himself. His national meeting has a negative stance on homosexuality, which he said is not shared by the local meeting. He said he doesn't share that view because of a pastoral

relationship he had with a man dying of AIDS who asked whether he could become a member of the local meeting.

"And there was no other answer, of course, other than the answer that God would have given," he said. "And that answer put me through a transformation in dealing with this question."

"The Bible says a lot of things," he added. "One of the things it says is Do Not Kill. As a society, we've done some interesting things with that. It also says "Don't Charge Interest," and we've done interesting things with that."

His meeting refuses to get drawn into the war over homosexuality because it only creates hurt.

"And we take the position at the meeting that we are to love regardless of whatever issues there are."

VIDEO STORES FEATURING GAY AND LESBIAN FILMS

By Rick Gould

Over our long and bitter winter, I rented many movies. One pleasant surprise, aside from finding my control with the slo mo, was how many gay and lesbian films are being stocked at our local video stores.

There's two reasons I think. One is that gay and lesbian subject matter is no longer "shocking." Although gay/les themes are becoming more common, it's television that has broken the taboo. All the comedies have done a "gay" episode. Friends has two lesbian characters who recently married. Roseanne has done the most gay and lesbian characters, with entire episodes devoted to them. NYPD Blue made a gay character a regular due to popular demand. Melrose Place has the long-suffering Matt, who may be that way because he never has much on-screen sex like M. P.'s other inhabitants. This and all the hot commercials and videos has wised up mainstream America a little. The other reason is that independent films are in vogue. I guess people have gotten tired of Arnold's \$200 million blow 'em ups. These smaller films come with less financial pressure. So, studios have taken a chance and there have been winners like *The Wedding Party* and *The Crying Game*.

What's changing is that video stores are catching on that there's an audience for these "art-house" flicks on video. Thank you, we can't always rely on the Bay Theatre! Now, amid walls of Waterworld and *Die Hard With a Vengeance*, there are single copies of movies where gay and lesbian lives are explored, not buildings being exploded. Here's the ones I've noticed:

Bar Girls is a slice-of-life comedy drama taken from Lauren Hoffman's play. This is kind of a Big Chill-type ensemble with lesbians. The lead bar girl is worried that a Saturday morning TV show she's created is going to be compromised by a male character, and a sympathetic one at that! Look quick for Chastity Bono as one of the bar girls—she's the one that looks like Cher before all the plastic surgery.

Jeffrey is given a just okay on-screen translation. The main problem is that Steven Weber is bland as the man who's afraid of sex in the age of AIDS. Maybe his role as Randy Brian on TV's *Wings* wore him out. However, Paul Rudnick's humor still shines through; *Star Trek's* Patrick Stewart is excellent; Michael T. Weiss is a hunky Steve, and there's an array of funny big-name cameo appearances.

Fall Time, with Mickey Rourke and Stephen Baldwin. A waste of

time! This suspense "thriller" casts these two as a gay couple who are bank robbers. You know, like Bonnie and Bonnie? Everything goes awry when three cute but stupid boys pull a prank that screws up the thieves' plans. From there, it's blood, guts and lots of bad dialogue. Having Rourke and Baldwin play wackos in the same movie seems like cruel and unusual punishment. The biggest laugh is that this flick is set in the 50's, but Mickey sports a tan leather jumpsuit and enough gold jewelry to make him look like a rapper—Mickey D?

Lie Down With Dogs, starring and directed by Wally White. This movie has a small budget but a big imagination. It's an autobiographical comedy of one boy's summer getaway to Provincetown. Of course his fantasies don't match up with reality and there are lots of laughs about the customs and rituals of P-town.

Priest, starring Linus Roache in the title role. Yes, this is the movie that got the Catholic Church's hassock in a bunch last year. Homosexual priests! Aaaaagh! Whoever heard of such blasphemy?! Well, the nay sayers should have seen the movie first. But they probably still would have bitched since the *Priest* questions the whole Catholic approach to morality. His homosexuality is actually a secondary plot issue and there's just verry discreet sex—this isn't *Priest Porno*. The most moving part of the movie is the man's helplessness in trying to rescue a young daughter from her father's incestuous advances. The finale has the priest coming back to the pulpit after having been busted by the cops for public sex. The young girl is the only person who'll take communion from him and the last scene's a tearjerker.

Showgirls, and boy, do they show 'em! The other controversial movie of 1995 tells the tale of an ambitious young stripper (dancer! she frequently barks) who upstages the reigning toast of Las Vegas. Elizabeth Berkeley is the young tootsie with the hard center and Gina Gershon is the star she makes toast of. They are both hilariously awful and so are their tacky clothes, hair and makeup. Gershon, with the biggest lip curl since Elvis, lusts after the young dancer, and does everything to get in her G-string. She doesn't but after the young girl pushes Gershon down a staircase (to get the star spot, natch,) Berkeley lays a big kiss on her at the hospital before leaving stardom and Las Vegas. This is lesbianism from a straight man's point of view—maybe that's why the movie is so funny.

Here's what is being advertised in stores as upcoming:

To Wong Foo, Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar. This movie made it on the big screen only as far as Elk Rapids. But the rest of the U.S.A. made it a surprise hit. Patrick Swayze got good reviews as the big sister drag queen and John Leguizamo was touted as stealing the show as a Rosie Perez-type gal. Wesley Snipes deserves credit for doing a dress-up instead of another shoot-'em-up. The word was that *Too Wong Foo* is a pleasant sitcom-type movie, but it eats Priscilla—Queen of the Desert's bus dust.

Unzipped is the hit documentary about designer Isaac Mizrahi's putting together his 1994 fall line. The tension here is that his previous line has flopped, so Miz Isaac is hauling out the big guns (supermodels Cindy, Kate, etc.) and the big attitude. All he needs is a Prissy to slap while he's trying to deliver! The previews for this *Truth or Wear* looks like fun. An Isaac moment shows him, hands on hips, examining Naomi Campbell's newly pierced navel with alarm: "Oh, Naomi! That's coming out!"

Obviously, not every video store may have all of these films at one location. So call ahead and they can head you in the right direction.