

N E T W O R K I N G NORTH

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Ontario Court's Ruling

"Spouse" should include same-sex couples

TORONTO — In a victory for homosexual couples seeking legal recognition, Ontario's highest court has ruled the federal government's definition of "spouse" is unconstitutional because it excludes same-sex partners.

A three-judge panel of the Ontario Court of Appeal ruled that the definition of "spouse" should be amended in the federal Income Tax Act to recognize same-sex couples as well as opposite-sex couples.

The ruling came in a case involving pension benefits and technically applies only to the Income Tax Act. But gay activists said it could set a precedent that would affect similar sections of other federal acts.

"It opens the door for same-sex pension benefits, certainly, but it's also a very significant statement by the courts that discriminating against same-sex couples is not only immoral, it's unconstitutional," said John Fisher, executive director of Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere.

"Clearly the broader impact of the ruling is the federal government must reconsider the definition of spouse in all federal laws to ensure it doesn't discriminate against gays and lesbians," he said.



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— SUMMER EVENTS —

GR Pride "Family Reunion", Saturday June 13 (see page 4)

Lansing Pride March, Saturday, June 20 (see page 5)

TC Pride Picnic, Saturday June 27 (see page 9)

FN Bike/Camp Weekend, July 24-26



FROM THE EDITOR

No one can say that the news has been boring lately. Incredible things are happening to (and for) gays and lesbians in politics and in the corporate/business world. And, most of it appears to be quite positive.

The front page has good news regarding a court decision in Canada that will apparently affect all gays and lesbians in the country. Also, with the latest happenings in the courtrooms in Alaska, we may just find that gay marriage will be possible in Anchorage, a move similar to Hawaii's. These court processes take many weeks, months, years and even decades (not to mention mega-finances) to achieve a decision.

So, as the courts take the tedious route to justice and change, the world of business can move in just a few weeks. Domestic partner benefits, once a longshot for U.S. employees at Detroit's Big Three automakers, appear closer to reality. For the first time, General Motors Corp. and Chrysler Corp. say they're seriously studying other Fortune 500 companies that offer medical and other benefits to unmarried and same-sex partners of company employees. An announcement is expected before summer.

Other things of interest on the political front are:

- ENDA, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, is apparently being pushed for a vote sometime yet this Spring in the Senate. It will be a very close vote, and one that the President and Vice President would like to see pass.
- The United States Senate on April 2 gave voice vote consent to confirm attorney Elaine D. Kaplan, an open Lesbian, as head of the Office of Special Counsel, an independent federal agency that investigates reports of discriminatory actions against federal employees.
- James Hormel, the openly gay heir to the Hormel Meat Company fortune, has been nominated for the post of ambassador to Luxembourg. The Senate has chosen to drag its feet on approving him, and Republicans who oppose his appointment have expressed their dismay that President Clinton is promoting a homosexual lifestyle.
- There are four openly gay women running this year for Congress in Washington, Massachusetts, California, and Wisconsin

This newsletter is looking for someone who will write a column on a regular basis recommending websites for our readers to visit. Please call me if you regularly surf and can pass along places of political, social, or educational interest-or just plain fun.

Richard Tuxbury

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, transgendered and their friends from northwestern lower Michigan. Located in Traverse City, we provide social activities, a newsletter, phone line, workshops, and a scholarship 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 Grace Episcopal Church at the Corner of Washington & Boardman the first Tuesday of every month (except August) at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

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

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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.)

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ADDRESS CHANGES: Please notify us in advance if a change is coming. Call John Evans, 922-0746, or e-mail changes to jdevans@gtii.com.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello,
What's up with this weather? I had my bike out in February, riding to work. I love the snow and winter and the cold, but when we get two weeks in February reaching into the 50's I couldn't resist.

We did find just enough snow for a great winter party up in Suttons Bay. If you didn't get out there you missed one of the best get togethers so far this year. The 45 gays and lesbians sliding down a hill is quite a sight, some of whom could represent the US in the next Winter Olympics with a little practice.

The Chili Cook-off was a big hit, with Tim Schmidt winning the Chili Crown. He has vowed that it will be passed on next year with a few additions from his bag of tricks.

I had the chance to attend a Common Voices dinner and meeting in the month of March. They are a wonderful group of people and I enjoyed talking with newly made friends and some old ones in what I found to be a stimulating evening. Some ideas and thoughts shared with me by members of Friends North have opened up all kinds of possibilities. I'm looking forward to future meetings and would encourage everyone to go and check it out.

The FN Board has been working on many things the past few months. Shelly, Brenda and Sheryl have membership renewals under control. Every month renewal forms will go out reminding members to renew their membership. This keeps a steady flow of revenue coming in.

Sue, along with M'Lynn Hartwell, is clearing up the red tape involved in updating the Friends North's Bylaws. Drafts of new Bylaws have been provided to the board for review.

Dan, with M'Lynn's help, is still working on what tax status would be best for F.N. There is a lot of red tape to sort through and the board was handed the tax status options for review.

Alan Williams has been working on a FN Web site and will be presenting the final format to the board at the April meeting. So be looking for the new FN Web site soon.

Gretchen, Jeff and I have been working on the 98 FN Bike Tour. The date has been set for July, 24,25,26. Mark your calendars. This is one event you don't want to miss. Even if you don't bike, consider coming out and joining us for dinner.

Sheryl has been working with Deb M. Mary F. & Lissa on the High Tea. I've talked with Deb & Sheryl about what they have planned. All I can say is WOW!! Door prizes, Entertainment, along with great food. This is something I'm not going to miss. I have a feeling Easter will never be the same after this High Tea. My family will be out of town. So I'll be spending Easter with my extended Family.

As always I encourage all of you to attend the FN monthly meetings. This is your organization. Without you, it is nothing.
—Kirk.

THINK SPRING WITH...

Common Voices

THE FRIENDS NORTH RAP GROUP

A safe place for the gay community

Tom Barkley and Ed Richardson

Common Voices, the Friends North Rap Group, extends a warm welcome to everyone in our g/l/b/t community to attend all our monthly events. Common Voices is an excellent resource for people just entering our community..

Our Rap Group gatherings are held the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm in the main floor church hall at Grace Episcopal Church, 349 Washington St, Traverse City. Parking is available in back and you can use the rear (north) entrance. Common Voices people will be near the main church entrances until 7:30 to welcome and direct first-timers. Rap sessions often include g/l/b/t topics and videos, but more importantly include time for anyone who needs to talk in a safe, comfortable environment.

In addition to rap sessions, Common Voices sponsors "Common Nibbles" — the 4th Wednesday (7:00 pm) monthly local restaurant gathering. A different local dining establishment is chosen each month. Common Nibbles is an excellent complement to our rap sessions, offering quality interaction (and quality food!). You don't need to spend a lot of money, just come to the restaurant and ask for the Common Voices group.

Common Voices, continued next page

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Common Voices regularly tries to sponsor additional activities such as potlucks, hikes, video nights, etc., thanks to those who want to keep the spirit of our group strong.

Common voices offers a free subscription to our monthly newsletter (which is also a reminder of our gatherings and special events). Please phone Ed or Tom at the numbers listed below to receive your copy. We need your name(s) and mailing address. (Phone numbers are appreciated but optional.) Our mailing list is confidential — no names/addresses will be given out by anyone in Common Voices.

For any information about Common Voices/Rap Group/Common Nibbles /CV newsletter/special events, phone Ed (947-4697) or Tom (275-6127).

Since the last Networking, we have seen a video about relationships, watched the movie "The Fox", and had a meeting where we talked with Kirk Mallow the president of Friends North and our own Alan Williams who is on the board. We discussed Friends North communications with the members, our group, and the general public, and talked at length about what the balance should be between the social and political aspects of Friends North. Recent dinners were at The Pasta Company and the Flap Jack Shack.

Our April meeting is on the 8th, and the topic will be safe sex. On May 13 we are expecting a guest speaker, Loraine Anderson of the Traverse City Record-Eagle. The June meeting is planned as an open discussion.



Out,ⁿ + About

A Lesbian Coffeehouse

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 23, Memorial Day Weekend MOVIES: Women from Down Under & Costa Brava. For additional information call JoAnn at 941-1702.

June 7, 1998 Sunday - Summer with a picnic in the park - Grace MacDonald Park (formerly Forest Lakes Township Park) at the corner of High Lake Road and Rasha Road, Traverse City. Bring picnic foods (grilling available), drinks and your own table service. Charcoal, lighter fluid, and matches will be provided. Games area available so bring volleyball, softball, and tennis equipment, frisbees and other lawn games. Mountain bike trails. Contact Brenda for info at 946-2708.

July - No Coffeehouse - On your own.

August - No Coffeehouse - See you at the MI Womyn's Festival.

September 19, 1998 To be announced - maybe a movie.

October 17, 1998 - Annual Auction, Holiday buying for your friends.

November 21, 1998 - Thanksgiving/Harvest Gathering and maybe more.

December - No Coffeehouse - Happy Hanukkah/Merry Christmas

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Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse is generally held on the third Saturday of each month except for this year there are few changes in dates. Please see related Out n' About Upcoming Events Calendar. No coffeehouses will be held for 1998 in April, July, August or 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 (\$5-\$10 if we have entertainment). Coffee, tea and snacks are free; soft drinks are available.

The coffeehouse is managed by an informal gathering of lesbians who call themselves the Steering Committee. Please consider joining the Steering Committee so that your ideas can be heard. The committee meets for a couple hours on the Monday prior to the 3rd Saturday coffeehouse or Monday prior to event, for planning of each month's event. For coffeehouse information, or location of committee meeting, call Brenda at 946-2708—leave message.

HELPLINE! HELP REQUESTED.

Thank you so much for your support of the HELPLine! in 1997
With hundreds of callers in 1997, the Northern Michigan
HelpLine! (Help and Information Line), has proven to be an extremely
valuable community resource!

The northern Michigan HelpLine! assists individuals, and
families, to address concerns about same-gender affectional
relationships and orientation — through information, counseling and
intervention. Typical calls to the HelpLine! include: people of all ages
wishing to discuss difficult coming-out issues, or seeking to locate
community events and services. HelpLine! also helps parents who are
attempting to understand what it means for their child to be gay or
transgendered. HelpLine! staff responds immediately in order to help
individuals and families cope with the difficulties they encounter as
the result of bias in our schools, family, church and community — 24
hours a day — every day of the year!

Would you please help us "help" hundreds of people in our
community again this year? Your generous contribution — mailed
today — will enable us to continue helping our community in 1998!
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MICHIGAN PRIDE MARCH VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Saturday, June 20, 1998 Downtown Lansing

Lansing-Michigan Pride, Inc., is looking for a few good men and
women to help make this year's Michigan Pride March the most
successful ever. Putting on the state's largest Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual,
Transgendered Pride event takes a lot of planning & work by the Pride
committee which is made up entirely of volunteers. "Our organization
is growing," said Co-Chair Tom Base, "but we still need a lot more
people to realize that Pride Changes Everything (this year's theme)
and to volunteer to help our community in any way they can."

So, needless to say, Michigan Pride, Inc., is always in search of
volunteers, either to join the committee or to help with Pride
weekend. Currently, we are looking for volunteers to help with the
Parade, Rally & Festival. "We need people who are willing to come
down early and help set-up everything, people who are willing to walk
& work the March, and volunteers that will help us tear everything
down at the end of the day," said Tom.

Set-up includes arriving early in the morning (around 7 AM) to
help at the festival site, which includes setting up all the tables and
chairs for the booths, stringing fencing up to designate various areas,
and generally being a Jack or Jill of all trades. For the March itself,
we need Monitors: people who actually march, but help keep control
of the parade and ensure the safety of the participants marching. And
at the end of the day, after the parade, rally, and festival are done,
we need people to help clean up everything.

If you think you'd like to volunteer, please call the Prideline at
517/371-8466. Pride does change everything, so enhance your pride
by volunteering.

Additional information is available at
<pride@michiganpride.org>

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TRANS SUPPORT GROUP MEETS

In October 1997 I attended the Friends North Board Meeting, and received authorization to form a Transgendered Support Group under the auspices of Friends North, Inc. Since that time letters and phone calls have produced a list of interested individuals. We met in February and March in Traverse City, and although not everyone on the list have attended, we have had two very enjoyable and productive meetings. **Wendy**, who is the owner of **Crowning Glory Wigs** in Traverse City, gave a program on wig selection and care during our last meeting. She has been a true friend of the "community" for many years (Grand Rapids prior to moving to Traverse City) and is always willing to help. We are extremely fortunate to have her in our area. It is our plan to have a presentation on various topics of interest at each meeting.

Discussions of purpose and direction for the group have revealed a serious need for support and education. Some individuals are deeply closeted, fearing the loss of family, friends and employment if their secret were to be discovered. And those who are less fearful at this time, have not been so in the past. Some individuals have never been to a T-Group meeting prior to this, while others have not even talked to another crossdresser. It is not difficult to understand the impact on one's mental health. One of the many subjects brought up was an individual's concern of maintaining a relationship with their God and living a transgendered lifestyle. So, I guess I would have to say the formation of a T-Group has been an unqualified success, and I am proud to have a part in it. If you know of anyone who would be interested in attending the Friends North Trans - Support Group, they can contact us by writing to:

T- Support Group
c/o Gwen Larson
PO Box 562
Traverse City, MI 49685

We will be meeting monthly in Traverse City, and for obvious reasons the time and location is not openly published. Your letter of inquiry is confidential, and should include a means of return contact so that it may be responded to in an appropriate manner.

ANGELS

February 14, 1998. My Great-Aunt Margaret died today. She was one of those peripheral relatives, those kind you rarely see, but every year you get a birthday card, or they send something for your graduation.

I suppose this is not special, and everyone has relatives like this. For me, however, those birthday cards were very special, for she wasn't really my Great-Aunt. My mother had married and divorced her nephew, and although only my brothers were her "natural" great-nephews, in her eyes I was her great-nephew too.

Having her acceptance was important beyond measure as I was growing up, and even now. She and her sister, Grandma Paolillo, were loving helping hands to my family.

I remember Christmas' that might never have been without them. Christmas' that parents struggled to pay bills, presents were out of the question, and then a package would come, stuffed with gifts, for all of us, and hidden, inside was an envelope. I never saw what was in it, but I knew. There was no doubt, in our house, that Santa Claus was not real, but we has something better, we had angels.

When I graduated from high school I got cards from them. They told me how proud they were that I was part of the family and how much they loved me. That was the gift I remember most. That was a gift that money could not buy and only true love can give. They gave me acceptance, for no other reason then just being alive, that was reason enough for them. This is something that the vast majority of my own "blood" family could not give me.

Many of us search for acceptance and love, and unfortunately, so many of us do not find it, even within our own families. Now, one of my angels is gone and I realize, too late, how much her gift meant to me.

— Dan Miller

APA SUPPORTS SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The Executive Council of the New York City-based American Psychoanalytic Association (APsa) on December 18 adopted a resolution supporting legal marriage for same-gender couples. In doing so, APsa joins numerous other organizations and celebrities which have adopted a resolution drafted by the national Freedom to Marry Coalition, which reads, "Because marriage is a basic human right and an individual personal choice, **RESOLVED**, the state should not interfere with same-gender couples who choose to marry and share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities, and commitment of civil marriage." APsa President Dr. Marvin Margolis, chair of the APsa's Committee on Issues of Homosexuality Ralph Roughton, M.D., and chair of the APsa's Board on Professional Standards Dr. Donald Rosenblitt specifically added their names to the APsa's announcement of its action.

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WORDS AND MUSIC: NEW BOOKS, MAGAZINES, CDS AND TAPES

By Rick Gould

Here are some new titles for spring, from local book and music stores:

At **AB CD's**, Norm e-mailed us this list:

Madonna, "*Ray Of Light*." Arguably the best work Madonna has done in 10 years, the new CD was produced by techno wizard William Orbit. Although a little behind the times, Madonna will bring this sound to the mainstream. Simply a very good album. (It's like when Linda Ronstadt went "New Wave"?)

Natalie Imbruglia, "*Left Of Middle*." Here is the latest female vocalist "flavor of the month" - however Imbruglia outshines many of her peers. The first single, "Torn," has ripped up the charts and this disc promises to do the same. 12 cuts of sheer enjoyment.

Soundtrack, "*Traveller*." Although this soundtrack, from the Bill Paxton film, has been out for a year, we recently discovered what a gem it truly is. Primarily country-based music with cuts by Randy Travis, Bryan White and k.d. lang. This soundtrack is as enjoyable as the film.

Ricky Martin, "*Vuelve*." Latin heart-throb Martin delivers a fine package of Latin pop music. Primarily sung in Spanish - even if you don't speak the language you will understand everything being said here. (The language of love?!) This Cd contains 14 cuts including the Spanish version of "Go the Distance" from the Disney film "Hercules", as well as an instrumental tune called "Casl Un Bolero". Good stuff!

Soundtrack, "*Good Will Hunting*." This disc contains some of the best musical moments from the film of the same name. Particularly of note are the performances by Pop/Rock singer/songwrite Elliott Smith. Smith's "Miss Misery" has been nominated for an Academy Award for Best Original Song from a motion picture. Other performances include music by The Waterboys, Danny Elfman, Dandy Warhols and Andru Donalds. Also be sure to check out Elliott Smith's solo effort entitled "Either/Or".

From **Waldenbooks**, Kevin mailed us these suggestions:

Wisecracker: The Life and Times of William Haines, Hollywood's First Openly Gay Star, by William J. Mann, \$29.95. Title kind of says it all, doesn't it? Haines was a popular star in the silents and talkies, whose breezy, natural presence made him equally adept in both comedy and drama. This book covers how his career came to an abrupt end, his 50-year love relationship, and his lifelong friendship with Miss Wirehangers herself, Joan Crawford.

The Venice Adriana, by Ethan Mordden, \$23.95. Another chockful novel by Mordden, this one grandly tells the story of a young writer's relationship with a once-great opera diva, whose autobiography he's agreed to write. Naturally, he soon finds himself in over his head. Shades of "Sunset Blvd."?

The Rape of Ganymede—A Greg Quaintance Novel, by John Peyton Cooke, \$24.00. Gay Manhattan P.I. Greg is hired to thwart an extortion attempt against Jimmy Gilber, a man-child musical superstar accused of having sex with a young boy. When the accuser turns up dead, and the boy goes on the run, the P.I. finds himself mixed up with greed, depravity, and violence. Hopefully, the author won't find himself mixed up with Michael Jackson's lawyer!

These stores appreciate your business and comments.

AIDS WALK MICHIGAN 1998

This year HIV/AIDS Wellness Networks will join 10 other cities to participate in the first statewide AIDS Walk supported by the Michigan AIDS Fund. The Walk will take place on September 27, 1998 at the Senior Center with registration at 1:00 p.m. and step off at 2:00 p.m.

The purpose of the walk is to promote awareness for this deadly disease and highlight services available in the community while raising needed funding for AIDS programming in our local area. Everyone's support is needed to make this a success so please consider helping out.

We will be sending out donation forms so walkers can raise dollars to support our efforts. We will also be looking for sponsors for the event. If you would like to participate as a volunteer, donate money for the walk or become a sponsor, please contact Brooke Gray at 929-3111 or the Wellness office at 933-0279.

Michigan's residents need your support. Surveillance reports estimate that between 8,500 and 12,000 Michigan residents are infected with HIV, with perhaps thousands not even knowing they are infected. AIDS is the leading cause of death for Michigan residents between the ages of 25 and 44, surpassing even accidents, suicide, heart disease and cancer. And the disease is quickly but steadily becoming a disease of women, children and people of color.

Don't just talk the talk, walk the walk - AIDS Walk Michigan, Sunday, September 27, 1998!!

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Letters

Dear Editor

I like your Newsletter. Not only is it put together very professionally, but invites its readers to express their views on a myriad of subjects. Today I accept that invitation and write as a gay man, a deeply committed Christian and a person who is deeply hurt by some of his gay brothers and sisters for their prejudice and discrimination against a church which he loves, which has accepted him as gay person and has honored his right and obligation to follow his God-given conscience.

In my experience, the Gay Community is quick to condemn the Catholic Church for what it thinks are the churches teachings, feelings and attitude toward the homosexual population. The church is unfairly put under a microscope of scrutiny not applied to other denominations. Too frequently the gay community relies on rumor, hear say or third party expertise rather than on the truth of what the church truly believes. The catholic Bishops of the United States recently wrote a very informative pamphlet entitled *Always Our Children*, which is intensely pastoral, caring and speaks of gay children as gifts from God. This is a far cry from those who would say that the church places every gay person in the lowest and hottest regions of hell. This pastoral message, addressed especially to parents of homosexual children is excellent. while it is not perfect, it definitely is a big step in the tight direction.

Rarely is it reported that hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent by the Catholic Church to assist those with AIDS or who are HIV positive. Next to nothing is said of the buildings, homes and other facilities donated along with support services by the Catholic Church to assist our gay sisters and brothers throughout the United States and the world. Little is said of Mother Theresa's Sisters and their tremendous ministry to the Gay Community. Practically nothing is said of the cardinal of New York who on a weekly basis visits and prays with people dying of AIDS. Few in the gay community know of Bishop Gumbleton of Detroit who speaks openly, proudly and reverently of his gay brother. This bishop is not afraid nor shy to affirm his respect for the Gay Community. And only on the rarest occasion does anyone hear of the hundreds, conceivably thousands of gay men and women who are very active in their church as Readers, Eucharist Ministers, Ushers, Musicians as well as being involved in critical roles of leadership of the parish.

Please do not lump the Catholic Church together with fundamentalists, extreme evangelists, Anti-Disney Baptists, the Jerry Falwell gang and with any person regardless of their religions who defame and discriminate against gays. The Catholic Church embraces its gay children. As the bishops stated so positively "God does not love someone any less simply because he or she is homosexual. God's love is always and everywhere offered to all who are open to receiving it"

Finally, in the words of the Catholic Bishops: "Nothing in the Bible or in Catholic teaching can be used to justify prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes and behaviors against gays. we call on all Christians and citizens of good will to confront their own fears about homosexuality and to stop the humor and discrimination that offend homosexual persons. Having a homosexual orientation brings with it enough anxiety, pain and issues related to self-acceptance without society bringing additional prejudicial treatment."

Editor, I feel better now that I have been given an opportunity to express my personal views and share my relationship with the Catholic Church. To Catholics who are gay and have left the Church, I urge you to take another look. Become involved in a parish and you will see that not only will you be understood and loved, but you will be accepted just as you are. A

good friend, Fr. Jim McLaughlin, who recently died, worked with and had a profound influence on the gay community. At his funeral which I attended there were a large number of our gay family present who can testify that the Bishop spoke eloquently, as did others, of Fr. Jim's work with the gay community. Does that sound like a church hell bent on condemning God's faithful, straight or gay? I think not. Keep up the excellent work, I look forward to each Newsletter and will continue to affirm my gayness and my church.

Name Withheld At Writer's Request

A School Report, by The Triangle Foundation

A Colorado discrimination case demonstrates some of the problems that are occurring with the Wayne-Westland School Board in Michigan. W-W School Board first passed an anti-harassment policy to include sexual orientation, then rescinded that policy after they were attacked by "religious" conservatives. Here follows a letter from students at Lutheran High School.



Dear Fellow Gay Rights Advocate,

We write to you regarding the expulsion of one of our friends, Jeremy Garza, from Lutheran High School in Denver, Colorado. Jeremy is a talented and spirited person. He was thrown out of his father's home and has lost a lot of support from classmates, family members, and teachers when he realized his sexuality. About a month ago, Lutheran's principal ruled that Jeremy would not be welcome at the school if he continued to support the gay community. This meant Jeremy could not display decals on his car windows or wear clothing {unspecified}, makeup, or jewelry which might imply that he belonged to or sympathized with the gay community.

It has been a difficult battle for the queer community to earn the limited status it has gained in society, but the battle has just begun. Please join us in our attempt to get the queer community onto the American breakfast table. As we strive to move from (in)tolerance to acceptance, please show your support. We urge you to write a letter to the administration of Lutheran High School at the address below. Although all we seek is that you show your support by writing, we also hope any further contacts or ideas you might have will get back to us. We have nothing to lose here, and everything to gain. Thank you for your time, and we hope to hear from (or about) you soon!

With Our Highest Regards,

Ash Brones
2543 S. Xavier St.
Denver, CO 80219-5615
Asherlauph@aol.com

Gina Chirichigno
Hampshire #117 P.O.Box 5001
Amherst, MA 01002-5001
gchirichigno@hampshire.edu

Please write to:
HS Faculty, Administration and Students
c/o Pastor Jules Clausen
Lutheran High School
3201 W. Arizona Ave.
Denver, CO 80219

shared letters

Livingston County Press, Brighton, Michigan, 2/18/1998

Letter to the Editor

DOES IT MATTER WHO IS GAY?

After reading numerous articles, editorials, and letters from around the community concerning the formation of the gay/straight alliance group (Prism) at Howell High School, it appears that we're divided on the issue. I thought perhaps a student's perspective in the matter might be helpful.

I am a senior at Howell High School, and am in no way affiliated with the Prism support group. Every day, I hear the racism and sexism that has been instilled in our "future leaders" and "model students" from every angle. This compares little with the homophobia I hear. Not only from students, but from staff as well. As I see it, homophobia runs along the same line and logic as racism and sexism. Group A believes it is naturally better so therefore has the basic right to put down, exploit and lower the quality of life for Group B. This is a major source of the class division endured at schools.

I often hear the gays portrayed in letters as rapists and corrupters, whose sole purpose in life is to make your children gay by using peer pressure as a catalyst. I've known many people, both inside and outside the group for years now, and they've NEVER asked anyone I know of, "Would you like to be gay? I'll show you how!" Besides bedroom behavior, they are no different than the rest of us. It makes me ask - Why are their personal lives so intimidating to our society?

The thing that bothers me the most is people talking of homosexuality as a "learned behavior," to say they are pressured into being gay. If I were to ask people if they would rather be African-American, most would say no. Why? They know that their CHOICE would cause them to be a target of persecution, in school, on the job, or in normal society. So would anyone CHOOSE a lifestyle of persecution? There is no sense in the "learned behavior" argument at all.

One last point. It appears that many are under the impression that the school began the Prism group. Wrong! The group was started by the students and for the students. Their group is very discreet. The few posters that were circulated didn't even have the words "gay" or "lesbian" on them.

Now, I know that many people in the community will say that the group should be dissolved because it is held on school grounds. Using that line of thought, maybe we should also dissolve the drug recovery groups that are also held on school grounds? I mean, they CHOSE to use drugs in the first place, right?

Now, before the Neanderthal conservatives in this town strike their angry pens to paper in defiance, citing morals and "God's Word" instead of simple fact, angry that the city is progressing (Yes! Tolerance in place of ignorance is progress!), I want you to ask yourselves this - Does it really matter if we're homosexual, bisexual, Jewish, African, Asian, or White Anglo-Saxon Protestants?

No, my friends, we're all HUMAN. And at least to me, that's all that counts.

Rickey F. Novak, Jr.

TC PRIDE PICNIC SATURDAY, JUNE 27



ROBB FARM

2:30-5:00 hiking,
biking, volleyball
5:00-7:00 Picnic

F.N. will provide Hamburgers, hot dogs,
tofu dogs, pride cake, and pop.

PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE

7:00 comedy short

OPEN MIC TILL 9:00

Dance till 12 Midnight

\$5.00 donation

Linda L. Wikle
Agent

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(Note: All classified announcements are run without charge. Please submit them in writing to the Friends North address, or call the editor at 616-271-3042 and leave the advertisement on the answering machine along with a contact phone number)

PERSONALS:

NATURAL MAN, 36 y.o., 210#, 6'2", good looking and looking for some sensuous fun, possible relationship. I'm romantic and sincere. Love massage, Native American culture, hiking, classical music. Write: Write to: Tahnodin, Box 176, Leland, MI 49654 (issue 3)

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANNOUNCING A BUS TOUR TO TORONTO, to see an exciting, major exhibition of Impressionist & Post-Impressionist art. Will visit other art & attractions too, & stay at the Radisson Admiral Plaza, on the harbourfront. Leaving TC Friday morning, June 26, returning Sunday evening, June 28. Call Tom Albrecht at 938-2163 for details.

ON-GOING ANNOUNCEMENTS

RAINBOW FRIENDS reaches out to lesbians, gays, bisexual and the transgendered in the NE Michigan area. Individuals in the region should feel free to call 517-354-0841 and contact me (Brad Vauter) for more information. Informal pot-luck type gatherings are generally held monthly in Alpena. In addition, occasional field trips are sometimes planned by interested participants. (issue 4)

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 5)

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF PETOSKEY is **meeting** at the Concord Academy, 2230 East Mitchell St. Services are held on the first and third Sundays of the month at 11 a.m. Please call 347-8916 for details or write POB 873, Petoskey, MI 49770-0873 (Issue 5)

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

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 1)

GROUPS:

FRIENDS NORTH MEETINGS: The Friends North Board meets on the first Tuesday of each month (Except August) at 6:30 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church, corner of Washington and Boardman Streets, across from the Old Courthouse. **ALL ARE WELCOME** (issue 5)

COMMON VOICES-THE FRIENDS NORTH RAP GROUP is a group of men and women who get together monthly for informal discussion, often on a particular topic. Please join us on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at Grace Episcopal Church, 349 Washington, T.C., at 7:30 pm. For information, call Tom at 275-6127 or Ed at 947-4697. (issue 5)

GLSEN, the Gay-Lesbian-Straight Education Network, is meeting monthly in Traverse City. They welcome all interested educators. For more information, call M'Lynn at 943-5050. (issue 5)

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 5)

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

OUT 'N ABOUT is a lesbian coffeehouse featuring entertainment as well as a chance to meet others from the area. It all happens at the Unity Church, 3600 Five Mile Rd. in T.C. Please see the Out 'n About calendar elsewhere in this newsletter for times and specific activities. (issue 5)

TRAVERSE CITY FRONTRUNNERS If you are interested in running, call Paul at 933-0572 and leave your name, number, and that you are interested in Frontrunners. He will return your call with information on where to meet. All ages and abilities are welcome. (issue 5)

WELLNESS NETWORKS SUPPORT GROUP is for people with HIV or AIDS and they welcome you to attend. Please drop in Monday evenings from 6:00 to 7:30 pm at the Grace Episcopal Church library at 341 Washington in Traverse City. Every fourth Monday of the month the Significant-Other Support Group will be meeting at 3301 Veterans Drive, Suite 221, just north of S. Airport Road. For further information, please call 933-0279. (issue 5)

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 (issue 5)

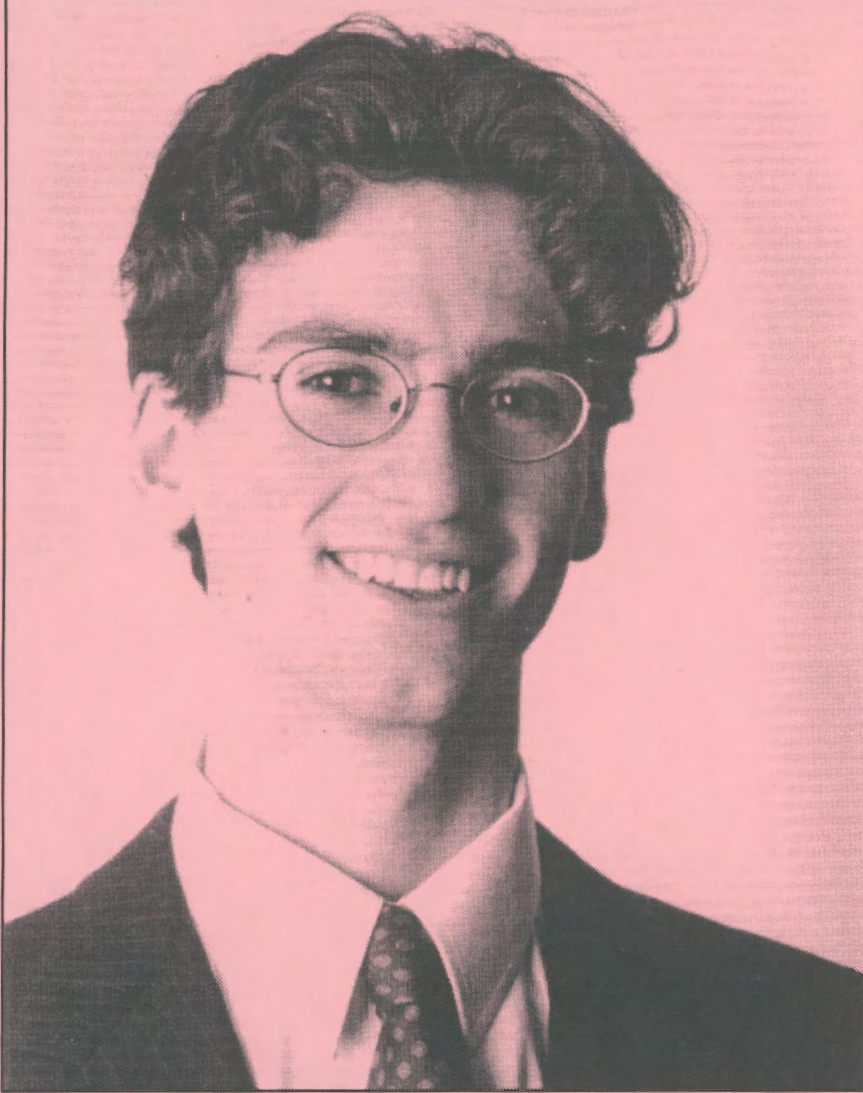
NORTHERN MICHIGAN WOMYN'S CHOIR is always looking for new voices. To obtain more information or for a performance schedule, please contact Deb at 276-9357. (issue 5)

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 5)

GAY ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: Meetings for gays and lesbians are held each Wednesday at 5:30 pm and 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 Hilda at 938-9294. (issue 5)

GAY-LESBIAN BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP is meeting on the last Monday of each month, 7:30 pm, at Border's Bookstore on South Airport Rd., T.C. For info, call Border's at 933-0412 and ask for Aimee. (issue 5)

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. Call Pamela at 922-0734 or contact Friends North. (issue 5)



Imagine a school where no students, faculty or staff have to face discrimination, harassment, or hatred.

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*Please help me make this a reality.
I need your vote and financial support.*

Drop of a check at The City Opera House on Thursday, May 14th, and stay for a special benefit concert by one of classical music's rising stars: **Richard Stadler**.

Admission is free. If you cannot attend, please send a check to:

The Committee to Elect Ian Whitney • P.O. Box 1129 Traverse City, MI 49685

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Education and Ethics for the 21st Century

WHITNEY

FOR SCHOOL BOARD

*A very special fund-raiser with a performance
by one of classical music's rising stars:*



**Richard
Stadler**
guitarist

**Thursday,
May 14th**

The City Opera House
112 1/2 E. Front Street, Traverse City

Admission is free. If you cannot attend, please send a check to:

The Committee to Elect Ian Whitney • P.O. Box 1129 Traverse City, MI 49685

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Gay Men have waited a lifetime for safe places of healing. We would like to offer one of them...



For Gay Men: The Retreat of a Lifetime



What
if...

- the hurt little Gay kid inside experienced unconditional love?
- the shame you feel about being a Gay man began to heal?
- you were whole and not fragmented?
- you could learn how to have healthy Gay friendships?
- you felt total acceptance?
- you could learn to create an intimate Gay relationship?
- you broke unhealthy family of origin patterns?

The things you just read are some of the goals of a Retreat Weekend hosted by Stephen Fleck and Joe Kort, both Psychotherapists with experience working with Gay men. The retreat is appropriate for Gay men who are partnered or single. This retreat is for the strong man who is willing to work through sorrow in order to achieve joy. The retreat will include experiential exercises, lectures, guided imageries, written exercises and communication processes. This means that Joe and Stephen will guide you through issues in a safe, caring and confidential atmosphere, allowing your Gay self to unfold.

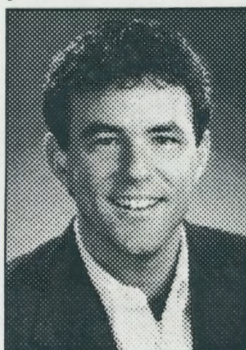
The Retreat of a Lifetime

February 27, 28 & March 1, 1998 or June 5, 6 & 7, 1998

(See other side for details)

About Your Guides . . .

Joe Kort, MA, MSW, ACSW is certified with the State of



Michigan as a Social Worker. He has both a master's degree in Social Work (MSW) and in Psychology (MA). He has been in clinical practice since 1985.

Joe specializes in Imago Relationship Therapy which is a specialized program designed to help couples heal their relationships. Joe is also trained in working

with adult survivors of sexual abuse/incest issues, sexually compulsive behaviors, chemical dependency, depression and anxiety. Joe also facilitates Gay men's psychotherapy groups. Individual therapy is also available.

Stephen Fleck, MA has a masters degree in Clinical and Humanistic Psychology (MA) and has been in private practice for several years.



Stephen works with the Gay community providing a safe and confidential environment. He helps clients to heal from anxiety and depression; cultural, religious and sexual shame; homophobia and internalized homophobia; intimacy dysfunction; and addictive/ compulsive behaviors. He also has extensive training in Integral Psychotherapy and Motional Processing. Both therapeutic approaches focus on integrating cognitive thinking with expression of feeling to create healing and positive change. Stephen works with individuals and couples along with facilitating several groups.

Both Joe and Stephen have a professional and personal commitment to the health and personal growth of the Gay men's community. For information call:

Joe Kort ~ 248/399-7317

Stephen Fleck ~ 810/558-3819

The Retreat of a Lifetime

Location, Dates and Cost . . .

The Retreats are held in the privacy of Stephen Fleck's offices at 29500 Ryan Road, just north of 12 Mile, in Warren, Michigan. Feel free to call either Joe Kort or Stephen Fleck at the numbers listed below for more information.

Upcoming Retreat of a Lifetime dates:

February 27, 28 & March 1, 1998

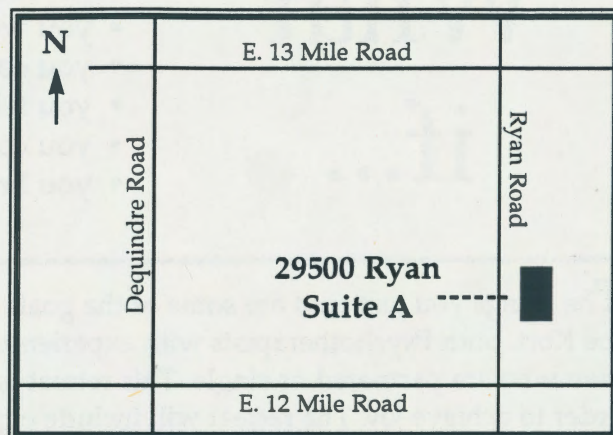
or

June 5, 6 & 7, 1998

Times for either sessions are as follows:

Friday 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. • Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Sunday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.



The Retreat is \$200.⁰⁰ in advance or \$225.⁰⁰ if 7 days or less prior to first retreat date.

If you have to cancel up to 8 days prior to the retreat, all but \$50.00 of your registration fee will be refunded to you. No refunds will be made if:

1. You cancel 7 days or less before the retreat
2. You do not attend
3. You do not complete the retreat

To reserve your space, simply fill out the registration form below, detach and mail with your payment.

For more information call:

Joe Kort ~ 248/399-7317

Stephen Fleck ~ 810/558-3819



Registration Form - Retreat of a Lifetime



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone: Daytime () _____ Evening () _____

Please indicate which weekend
you will be attending:

Please make your check or money order payable to:

Joe Kort or Stephen Fleck

Mail payment along with completed registration form to:

Retreat of a Lifetime

217 S. Knowles St.

Royal Oak, MI 48067

BEING BLIND AND GAY

(Editor's Note: The following article was originally published in a French-Canadian magazine and is republished here with the permission of its author, Robert, who can be reached via e-mail at: harlynn@panix.com)

I was born on December 1, 1949. I was three months early, and only weighed 1lb 14oz. I was put into an incubator and, due to the amount of oxygen I was given, my retina cells developed too quickly, and became so damaged that by the time I was brought home from the hospital, I was totally blind. I of course have never seen and have absolutely no visual memories at all.

My parents decided that they would try to treat me as normally as possible, and although I often heard the word "blind" I did not really know what it meant. I was guided by my mother, or by my aunts. I was always made a fuss over because people said I was such a "cute little boy". Many lamented my fate, but I was carefree and happy. When I was about 5 years old, I began to realize that I was different from other children. I heard children running around without being guided. Kids talked about coloring, drawing, and writing with a pencil. When I asked my mother, she told me that I would go to school and learn to read and write braille. I knew I was different, but I of course did not understand the ramifications of my blindness, and took all in stride.

When I was about 8 years old, I began to realize that other kids made friends more easily than I did. I went to a school far from my home, and was taken there by bus. There were other blind kids at the school, and I noticed that we all stayed together. When we did go to classes with the sighted kids, we were treated kindly, but were not really fully included. I would sit for hours listening to kids read out loud from print books, or hear the teacher writing on the black board. I loved the sound the chalk made against the blackboard, but I realized that others could read what was being written, and all I could do was listen to the sound of the chalk.

I will skip a few years and talk about when I was 14 years old, and in the ninth grade. I began to be teased by the other blind kids, because I mostly wanted to play with the girls, and did not want to participate in the rough games the blind kids played. They would play a form of hockey and use a large closet to guide the puck. I was afraid of these games because I was always overweight, slow, clumsy, and I usually wound up getting badly hurt. Also, I did not enjoy them. I much preferred sitting and reading a braille book, or talking to the girls. I even learned to bounce a ball, and learned some of the rhymes the girls would say while playing ball or jumping rope. I was teased unmercifully, and soon, even the girls got tired of playing with me, and so I mostly stayed alone, reading, and listening to what was going on around me. I knew that I was very different from the other kids, and I felt horribly lonely. I didn't fit in with the sighted kids, but what was worse, I didn't fit in with the blind kids, either. All the boys were interested in sports and rough games. I wasn't. Some talked about girls, but because I was blind from birth, and because nobody ever talked to me about sex, I had no idea what was being discussed. I am ashamed to say that I didn't even know the difference between

girls and boys, except that girls were usually nicer to me, and yet, I felt a strange feeling when hugging a male student.

When I was 15 years old, a girl explained to me how babies were born.

"You're very stupid!" Harriet told me. "Your father stuck his penis in your mother's hole, and that's how you were born. Don't you know anything?"

I wanted to ask more questions. Where was this hole? What was all this talk about "hard ons" and "erections?" But I knew that if I admitted how little I knew, I'd be laughed at, so I kept quiet.

I could not ask my mother. She never talked about such things, and I knew she would only be upset and tell me not to ask so many questions. So, I ordered books in braille about sex, and read them, and had a vague understanding.

What is surprising, and very important, is that I began to realize that I was attracted to other boys and men, and not to women. I realized that I had a strange feeling when close to people of my own sex that I did not have when I was with women. I somehow knew that this was not the way it should be, and never mentioned it to anyone.

I will now talk about my college years. I spent 4 years at a well known college in Ohio. I had finally figured out that I was gay. I wondered if there were other gay students, but did not know how to meet them. I tried dating girls, and forced myself to kiss them, but I knew it wasn't working. I wanted to talk about my feelings, but had nobody to express them to. When I was a senior, (my last year of college) some students who I had heard were gay decided to start a discussion group. I wanted to go, but was afraid to ask for directions to where the discussion was taking place, because I did not want others on campus to realize I was gay. To understand my dilemma, it is important to realize that I was not able to fit in with the other students because of my blindness. I had some casual friends, but I was not part of any social group. I spent much time alone, or being read to by fellow students. I therefore was very uneasy about admitting that I was gay, because I was afraid I would be even more unaccepted than I already was. I felt that I had enough strikes against me by virtue of the fact that I was blind and overweight. I didn't have the courage to add another problem to the list.

During my four years at college, I never had any gay friends, and never even knew that one of my roommates was gay. I kept all of my feelings inside.

Now, I must talk about my two years in France. I went to France through an American program, and I stayed there for two years. I arrived in France after my graduation from College. I met two blind guys who were gay. One was a fellow from Algeria, and the other was a blind French guy. I had my first experiences with them. I wanted desperately to meet other French gay people, but was afraid to ask my classmates. I had no access to printed materials, and no way to try to meet French gay people.

When I returned from France, I got a job working with non-English speaking kids who needed help with reading and speaking English. I badgered my parents until they helped me get my own little

BLIND continued page 12

studio apartment. I still live in this apartment, as rents are very high in NYC, and I am presently on a fixed income because I took an early retirement. But getting back to my story: when I finally had my apartment, I decided I was going to try to meet gay people. I was now free from my parent's restrictions, and I had a guide dog. So, I was ready to conquer the gay world! But how could I find out information? I had nobody to read printed material to me dealing with gay subjects. I had no way to know who was gay and who wasn't. I wondered how sighted gay people met. I finally called a gay hotline and was given the names and addresses of some gay bars. I was told about a group called "mirth and girth" which is for overweight gay people. (In Montreal, I think the group exists under the name Club Panda.)

I remember my excitement when my guide dog and I set out for our first gay bar. We got off the subway at Christopher Street, a street in the heart of the village. I asked for directions to the bar, and got there. Once inside, I realized that this wasn't going to work! First of all, the noise level was incredible! I couldn't hear a thing. Second of all, because I couldn't see, I had no idea what was going on around me. I was basically rendered deaf and blind because of the noise level. I sat at the bar, and felt worse and worse as time went by. Nobody tried to talk to me. I finally got the courage to tap the person next to me, and to try to strike up a conversation. The guy was polite, but after talking with him a while, he told me he was with someone. I realized that I had no way of knowing who was alone, who was with someone, and what was going on. I left the bar. I went to other bars on subsequent days, but had no better luck. The only time people talked to me was when I asked for directions, or they had to guide me to help me cross the street.

I began to realize that being blind was proving to be a barrier in my meeting gay people. I decided that, perhaps the problem was the fact that I was overweight. So, I decided to go to a Mirth and Girth dance. Surely, there would be people much heavier than I was, and surely I'd have a better time. Well, unfortunately, the same thing happened. I was shown to a seat, and there I stayed. Nobody came over to talk to me. I finally left and vowed I would never try to meet gay people in this way. It wasn't working, and I was feeling worse about being blind and being gay than I ever had in the past.

What is my situation now? Well, I am 47 years old. I have very few gay friends. I have strong opinions, though. Basically, I am disappointed with the gay community, at least in NYC. I had thought that, because of the horrors of AIDS, gay people would be sensitized to the needs of others. But this hasn't been my experience. It seems that the gay community is ready to help those who become blind from AIDS. They reach out to those suffering from Aids. This is how it should be. But this compassion does not extend to those of us who are gay, but who are blind for other reasons. What I am about to say may sound harsh, but it seems to me that if you are a person with AIDS, you gain a certain respect, even a certain prestige in the gay community. Organizations are set up to help meet your needs. You are included, and you are helped. But if you are just an ordinary gay person with a disability, you don't have that certain "mystique". You are basically not made to feel like you belong.

Imagine walking down a heavily gay populated street. You see a blind person with his guide dog. You probably don't stop to ask yourself, "Is he gay? Could he want to talk? Would we have something in common?"

I am hoping that this article will give readers a better understanding of what it is like to be blind and gay. I am also hoping that I will make some new friends and meet some people who will accept me for who I am, and who will be able to look beyond my blindness. What is sad to me is that I have met some exceptionally kind gay women, and some straight men, with whom I have become friendly. But I want to have more gay male friends. I want to be able to talk with other gay men, take walks with them, have things described to me, have things read to me that pertain to gay topics, and have a few buddies who I can feel a closeness to.

I was in Montreal last summer and was very impressed by the kindness of many of the people I met. I therefore decided to try to place an ad in the magazine, hoping to make some contacts. This would enhance my future visits to Montreal. And, it would be a great way for me to practice my French. I'd love to hear gay articles read to me in French. Think of all the new vocabulary I'd learn! And, just maybe, I'd make some deep, meaningful friendships: something that hasn't happened to me in NYC.

I don't want to limit myself to only French-speaking gay people. After all, perhaps there are some English speakers who read this magazine.

Please feel free to contact me. I hope that I have been able to give you a glimpse of what it is like for me as a totally blind and gay person. I ask only that I be accepted for who I am.

It is of course important to realize that certain things are a must. First of all, it is imperative that any new friends I make understand that I am blind and will need help with certain tasks: being guided, having things read to me, and having movies described. Also, it is important that anyone wanting to get to know me understand that I have a guide dog, and my dog comes with me. When I am walking with a friend, my dog, Harley, walks at my side on his leash. He does not guide me unless I take the harness

handle. Under the laws of the Province of Quebec, guide dogs are accepted in all public places. For the most part, I have found the Quebecois to be wonderful in understanding this, but I will never permit anyone to try to tell me I cannot enter with my dog, whether

BLIND continued page 13

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it be a restaurant, or a taxi. So, I guess I am asking that my new friends understand this. My dog and his work and devotion to me must be accepted and respected.

Once I make a friend, with time and patience, my blindness becomes less of an issue. In fact, a close friend of mine who comes to read my mail every week, has told me that he just takes it as a matter of course. He guides me easily and knows that "No dog, no Bob!"

I have a good long distance program that enables me to call Canada for only 12 cents a minute. So, I will be able to call you back. I can speak French pretty well, but do make errors at times.

I thank you for reading my article. I hope it gives you a better understanding of who I am. Remember, whether we can see or not, whether we can hear or not, whether we can walk or not, we are all human beings with the same needs, desires, wants, dreams, and hopes. We are not as different as outward appearance would make you think at first glance!

is a case of "selfhealing." The traditionally angry, obsessive Christian male has just evolved another step. Mostly erect, and occasionally cognizant, one step higher on the physio-spiritual evolutionary ladder. Never mind the fact that the rest of humanity arrived at this plane over 130 years ago during the Lincoln era. Butthead raves on about PK's stand on racial equality, and I wanted to say something like "Welcome to the 19th century". But I didn't.

What surprised me the most was that he actually thinks he put one over on me, that I am swallowing his raft of crap, hook, lie, and stinker. He expects me to approve of his involvement in the Promise Keepers! He may have even thought he had converted me. Does he think that because I'm gay, I'm stupid?

I must have been so stunned that I went numb. Either that or I just chickened out, the way I did when the state trooper asked about the significance of the rainbow triangle in my back window, and I said "just decoration". Don't worry, at least I abused myself emotionally afterwards for about an hour, and it will never happen again, till next time. He gave me a ticket anyway, so I have been properly admonished.

So I said nothing to Butthead; nothing like the truth, that is. Nothing like, "Wake up you idiotic Aryan peabrain" or "Yoohoo - earth to Pod-boy" or "Here's a dollar - go buy a friggin' clue. Discrimination against anyone is still bigotry." No, I mumbled something untrue yet stupid, like "Gee, that's nice". But don't worry - I'm still punishing myself for that one. It will never happen again, till next time.

CONFESSIONS OF A PROMISE KEEPER'S BROTHER

by Diamond Sellars

My brother is a Promise Keeper. This is not to say, of course, that he always keeps his word. I doubt Diogenes would have thrown away his lamp if he had met him. My brother is a Capital P Promise Keeper. He belongs to that testosterone-based neo-Nazi group led by Bill McCartney and his Colorado anti-gay brigade.

For a long time I put up with Bill McCartney, even though I have been openly gay for 12 years. I humored my young niece when she proudly showed me her WWJD jewelry. I controlled my rage when an acquaintance suggested that God could "heal me" of homosexuality. More importantly, because Promise Keepers seemed to have a good effect on some of the abusive Christian members I have known, I bit my tongue. They appeared to be better, calmer, more socially aware creatures, so I let it go. Most importantly, the Promise Keepers generally left me alone.

I was surprised recently when my brother the Promise Keeper called, not because he called, but by what he said. My brother - let's just call him Butthead, because no one should be without a name, even in a column written by some bitter queen with a pseudonym - my brother has been overtaken by the Promise. He is a Pod-boy now, having been replaced in his sleep by the subtle tentacles of a perverse alien growth. Of course, he always was a little bit different. One of "them", you know, prone to sacrificing reason on the altar of passion. But I fear they have him now. I only hope God can forgive him, because he definitely knows not what he does.

Butthead is very excited about Promise Keepers. "Such a positive force in American society", he claims. "What a bold stand against racial bigotry in the church. How enlightened they are, calling upon each other as brother to brother, to be more honest, more responsible, gentler, and more tolerant. It

WELLNESS NETWORKS OFFICE MOVES

After three good years with the United Way, Wellness Networks has moved there office to 112 West 14th Street to join the American Red Cross. "It was a hard decision to relocate" said Jim Carruthers Executive Director for Wellness Networks, "but the new location offers a much larger space, with windows, and a chance to work hand in hand with the American Red Cross."

The new Red Cross building is similar in size to United Way with two training rooms, a spacious administrative office area, employee lounge and high visibility along 14th street. Wellness will miss the United Way but looks forward to a future with the American Red Cross. Stop by for a visit anytime and look for the open house in the near future.

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WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, MY FRIEND?

by Greg Baird

Like the great Houdini, I disappeared for a few months and now I am happy to say that I have returned. I have had so many folks ask me where I have been and why I haven't written for what has seemed like ages.

Well first, my job has been keeping me busier than usual and I also have been speaking to different groups on building a positive gay communality, gay youth and self esteem in the gay community.

My source of inspiration to speak came from my friend and ex-boyfriend James. If you had read my column over a year ago you would know that I met James in 1990. He was the very first boyfriend I ever had - the first time I really ever felt truly in love.

About a year after we split up, James contacted HIV from unprotected sex. I found out in October of 1996 he had full blown AIDS. I told him from the moment I met him until the day I found out he had full blown AIDS that I would always be there for him, even when he got ill. Well that time came this past November. James was no longer able to communicate verbally with me, our conversation was through eye blinks and hand squeezes.

The last time I was able to take him outside of his home was a week before Thanksgiving. I can still see myself sitting in a local park, in my jeep, hand-feeding him a Big Mac and a Strawberry Shake - his favorites. That moment will pass through my mind for the rest of my life.

Christmas Eve was the last time I saw James alive and when I left his bedside to go home, a tear rolled down his cheek. I remember that two hour drive home to Petoskey was filled with questions on why he cried. I know now in my heart he wanted to get through the holidays and then say good-bye.

On January 2, 1998 at 5:00 pm in the afternoon, James passed away. I'm glad I was there for him and that he was able to leave this world knowing he was loved - in so many different ways. It was wonderful knowing I was loved by him too.

Through all of this and during conversations with James, I have been inspired to talk to colleges, groups and organizations about gay issues as well as HIV/AIDS. As a person who is HIV negative, I have a stronger desire to get the message out. I am hoping through my life story and my time with James, I am able to inspire others about the gift of life, the gift of friendship and commitment.

On February 13 - 17, I was asked by Jeanie White-Ginder, Ryan White's mother, to come to Los Angeles and speak to 400-500 teens, peer educators, teachers, parents and care givers at the Ryan White National Youth Conference on HIV/AIDS. The conference was titled "Life Activists." As one of the keynote speakers, I was able to talk about "Building a Positive Community, Self Esteem and Role Modeling." It was an incredible experience.

I spoke about how we can be the "rock" in our community. When that rock gets thrown into a pool of water, ripples blend outward from the center of that splash. We need to have that effect in our communities. The wave of change. It starts with you, then your friends, co-workers, communities, state, country and world. We all have a gift to offer our community. It can be anything from cooking for the poor, inspiring others, writing, leading, whatever - you can offer that wave of change.

During the Ryan White Youth Conference, I met so many people who were doing incredible work in their communities. Gay and straight youth were able to work together side by side and were really making a difference - inspired in a variety of ways.

May you too be able to start that wave of change in your community. Nothing will happen if you don't get involved. And, if you can inspire others along your way - you will have started that wave of change. Best wishes on your venture.

ANNIVERSARY BLUES?

Alan Williams

It's getting close to my one-year anniversary with my boyfriend. It wasn't really that easy to figure out an anniversary date: He and I first met each other, over the phone, about eight years ago, but we didn't get together until last year. However, even "get together" is a tricky term in our case. We ran into each other on the Internet in January; he came up to see me (and we met in person for the first time) in March; and he moved up here in May.

So where do you start the anniversary process in a situation like that?

I used to think anniversaries were simple. You meet someone, you fall in love, you settle down, and somehow the anniversary date just comes in there. If you're married or you have a commitment ceremony of some kind, then there's your anniversary date. As yet, however, there's no commitment ceremony in my immediate future, and the eight-year gap between my first conversation with my boyfriend doesn't lend itself to a "first anniversary" scenario very well. To complicate it further, there was the Internet. Does that count as an anniversary? For some people it does; I've heard of couples celebrating their anniversaries based on when they hooked up after, uh, "hooking up." Then there's the matter of meeting in person: My

Anniversary continued next page

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boyfriend first showed up in Traverse City in early March to spend a month with me, but he didn't actually move up here until early May. I can't even fall back on the "day I took him home" bit; when he moved up from Missouri, my parents offered him overnight accommodations, so I was nowhere near when he met the folks.

So the dilemma remained. When my boyfriend brought up the question of "When is our anniversary?" I had no easy answers. I knew I loved him before we ever met face to face, and my interest in him had withstood a separation of many years. But where do you put your finger on a calendar and say "Here was the magic moment"?

Oh, so many decisions. Who would've ever thought that anniversaries were decided by committee?

I'm happy to say that my boyfriend and I settled on an anniversary date. Really, it was my choice, since he said he already knew he loved me before we met. However, I was the one who picked out the day as the one he arrived at the airport for his month-long visit.

That was the day I put a face to the man I love.

TRIANGLE NEWS BRIEFS

Buy Your Dogs-n-Suds from Triangle

Triangle is "coming out" at the ball game. This year for the first time, volunteers will staff Tiger Stadium's concessions. Triangle has signed up as a fundraising project and will receive 10% of its gross concession sales. When you are at a Tiger game, look for our banner and come over and say "Hi." If you would like to join us and be a volunteer, call Gary Sarto at the Triangle Office.

When given the company's volunteers contract to sign, we noted that sexual orientation was not included in their local nondiscrimination policy statement. Triangle Board member and attorney, Rudy Serra, contacted the concession company, and they are seriously considering including sexual orientation in both their local and corporate policies.

Hate-Motivated Violence Continues to Rise

On Tuesday, March 3, the Triangle Foundation held a press conference for the gay and mainstream media to publicize the 1997 report of hate-motivated violence against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and HIV-positive (lgbth) people. Sadly, the news is not good. While crime rates fell dramatically across the country, hate-motivated violence against lgbth people rose 2% in 1997 following a 6% increase in 1996.

The rise of hate-motivated violence in Detroit and Michigan is even more disturbing. In 1997, the Michigan lgbth people experienced a 12% increase in violence! We hope that at least a portion of this increase is the result of lgbth people being more willing to report violence against them.

FAITHFUL FRIENDS

Why People of Faith Should Support Equality for Gays and Lesbians

The Interfaith Alliance, a nationwide organization with members from more than 50 denominations and communities of faith, formally announced in September its endorsement of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. This move came after serious analysis of the bill's objectives, and after considering the moral responsibility of people of faith to actively support civil rights for all Americans. Dr. Herbert D. Valentine, founding president of The Interfaith Alliance, explains some of the process that led to this critical show of support.

IN 1996, RALPH REED, THEN EXECUTIVE director of the Christian Coalition, made a public apology. He said that most of the people who make up the Christian Coalition stood on the sidelines of the civil rights struggle of the 1960s. While thousands of people were maimed or murdered, while hundreds of churches were bombed or burned, while the religious and political demagogues told America that God supported segregation of the races, they stood silent. That was wrong, Reed said. He is sorry.

In the 1970s, the civil rights struggle added to its focus the promotion of equal rights for women. As millions of American women fought for equal pay and equal opportunities, they, too, found religious political extremists blocking their path.

Today, the civil rights struggle continues, **not only** for African Americans, women, the disabled and other ethnic minorities but for lesbians and gay men. So it should come as no surprise that the Christian Coalition, the Family Research Council and other political religious extremist organizations are trying to block the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, a bill to outlaw job discrimination based on sexual orientation. Just as they did with the civil rights bills of the 1960s and the Equal Rights Amendment of the 1970s, the religious right has denounced ENDA as a threat to "traditional family values." They claim that ENDA would place immorality on the same footing as morality and force some communities of faith to accept behavior and activities that run counter to their religious beliefs. They also assert that ENDA equates sexual orientation with race and gender, thereby weakening the civil rights of women and African Americans.

None of these claims are true. ENDA does not affect heterosexual families, it is not a proclamation about morality and it does not force any community of faith to change its present beliefs about sexual

Continued next page

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behavior. Rather, ENDA strengthens civil rights by extending them to those who currently suffer legal discrimination in the workplace.

On ENDA, as on so many subjects, Christian Coalition founder Pat Robertson and James Dobson— head of another political religious group, Focus on the Family do not speak for all people of faith. They do not even speak for a majority of Christians. Recent polling by the Human Rights Campaign shows that 70 percent of Christians believe that "gays and lesbians should be protected from discrimination in the workplace." Furthermore, 63 percent of all Christians favor passage of "a bill which would extend current civil rights protections in the workplace to cover gays and lesbians." Clearly, the Christian Coalition is out of step with a majority of Christians; Focus on the Family needs to focus on the facts.

The simple truth is that the vast majority of Christians and other people of faith believe in fairness and equality, and therefore support civil rights for all Americans. Whatever their particular views on homosexuality, most people of faith believe that no group of Citizens should be singled out for legal discrimination, and no **American should be treated** unfairly in the workplace. That's why the majority of people of faith reject the gay bashing rhetoric of the extreme right and support ENDA.

That is also why The Interfaith Alliance has endorsed ENDA. The alliance is a nonpartisan grassroots organization that promotes the positive role of religion in American society and provides people of faith with a mainstream alternative to political religious extremism. As a nationwide organization with members from more than 50 denominations and communities of faith, The Interfaith Alliance has a strong commitment to diversity and tolerance. Our shared religious values compel us to affirm the dignity and worth of all human beings, whatever their race, sex, religion or sexual orientation.

The decision to endorse ENDA was made by The Interfaith Alliance board of directors. As a coalition of diverse people of faith, we have our differences on a number of issues—including homosexuality. But we are absolutely united in our firm commitment to civil rights for all Americans. We cannot stand by silently and allow members of the gay community, or any group, to face discrimination in the workplace. Nor can we allow religious political extremists to speak on Our behalf. That is why we at The Interfaith Alliance join with people of faith across America and proudly endorse ENDA.

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THE TROUBLE WITH 'DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL'

New Defense Department draft report shows that the number of homosexuals being forced out of the military under the "Don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue" policy is 67 percent higher than when the policy was adopted in 1993. The report is silent on what might be causing this surprising result. Yet the Pentagon seems resistant to examining the most disturbing and obvious possibility, which is that base and unit commanders are subverting a policy that was intended to stop witch hunts and to insure some measure of privacy for gay men and women in the ranks.

The Pentagon spin is that service members are voluntarily declaring themselves gay to get out of the military. But if that were true, wouldn't discharge numbers have stayed roughly the same from year to year?

The report should cause Defense Secretary William Cohen to worry that commanders are not being adequately trained on the purpose of the policy or the appropriate limits on investigations. At the same time, the nominal policy may be causing homosexuals to believe that they need not remain as vigilantly closeted as they were before. In any event, the promise of greater tolerance that was supposed to follow President Clinton's declaration of this new policy is turning out to be unfounded.

Military guidelines say that investigations cannot be based on mere suspicion or rumor. Associational behavior such as going to gay bars or reading homosexual books is not to be used as evidence of homosexual conduct. Yet there continue to be cases where service members are directly asked about their sexual orientation. Reliance on anonymous reports is not uncommon.

In some egregious situations, individuals who complained about anti-gay harassment were then investigated for being gay. The decision to begin an investigation is left to the commanding officer. Yet some commanders are inadequately versed on the guidelines, according to the report.

At a minimum, better training has to be put in place. The report also recommends that commanders consult with legal officials before initiating investigations. But these improvements will not cure the injustice inherent in a military that is allowed to drum effective people out for no reason other than homosexuality. Mr. Clinton erred in 1993 when he let Gen. Colin Powell and others bully him into backing away from his original intention to ban discrimination against homosexuals in the military. This report provides a measure of that error.

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DNC INCLUDES GAYS & LESBIANS IN DELEGATE SELECTION RULES FOR 2000 CONVENTION

Washington, DC: The Democratic National Committee's bodies governing the delegate selection rules for the 2000 National Democratic Convention — the DNC Rules & Bylaws Committee & DNC Executive Committee — voted unanimously in a meeting this weekend to include the first-ever language requiring state parties to specifically include Gay & Lesbian representation as part of the delegate selection process for the 2000 Convention.

"Gay and Lesbian Democrats and our community have taken a significant step forward," said Jean O'Leary of California, Chair of the DNC Gay & Lesbian American Caucus and member of the DNC Executive Committee, the governing body of the DNC. "These new rules will likely increase the number of openly Gay and Lesbian delegates to the 2000 Convention and mark the first time that a major National Party organization has included Gays and Lesbians as a priority for selecting delegates to a National Party Convention."

"These new rules reflect what we have done for the Democratic Party and this Administration over the years as well as how critical our community's support will be for a Democratic Presidential victory in 2000," said Jeff Soref, Vice Chair of the DNC Gay & Lesbian American Caucus and At-Large DNC Member from New York.

"MILLENNIUM" MARCH ON WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON — The nation's largest gay and lesbian political organization and the nation's largest gay faith-based movement announced plans today to sponsor a march on Washington in the spring of the year 2000. The event will be produced by veteran march organizer Robin Tyler who brought the organizations together to formulate planning.

The Human Rights Campaign and the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches are exploring dates in spring 2000 for the "Millennium March on Washington for Equal Rights," the heads of both organizations said today. Several prominent organizations have signed on as endorsers, including the National Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum, the National Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, the National Youth Advocacy Coalition, Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund. Representatives from these organizations and others will be sought to participate on an organizing committee which will help facilitate the organization and presentation of the event.

"This march will set a new tone for a new century," said Elizabeth Birch, executive director of the Human Rights Campaign. "Full equality under the law will be our achievement in the new millennium."



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SACTO YOUTH LOBBY DAY DRAWS HUNDREDS OF QUEER KIDS

by Marghe Covino

Some 300 gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered youth from all over California came to the State Capitol on a mission Wednesday, January 21. In one day, they met with their state representatives, presented a list of demands, held a rally on the Capitol steps, and attended training on advocacy and building networks.

Laurie McBride, executive director of LIFE Lobby, said, "LIFE Lobby is proud to host Youth Lobby Day, a forum for California's gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered youth and their allies. It's a day for our youth to challenge their legislators; take seriously their need for legislation to protect them in their schools, and stand up for their right to an education without discrimination and harassment. Over 300 youth took part in their day - young, vibrant, articulate, and proud. They deserve the full protection of law as equal and valued citizens of this great state."

Indeed, the group was very aware that a bill mandating protections for them in schools, which Assembly Speaker Pro Tem Sheila Kuehl, D-Santa Monica, authored last session, failed in the legislature.

Ken Locke, a participant from Sacramento, said, "This is an important opportunity to meet our legislators in person, to give them a chance to see us as human beings, rather than as political abstractions. Anti-gay prejudice and discrimination has made adolescence a nightmare for many of my friends. No one should have to fear being attacked or killed because certain individuals have not learned to treat their fellow human being with respect. To me, today is about countering negativity and making our presence known."

As the young people recounted their personal stories of violence and discrimination, of hate speech and ostracism, of going to school day after day feeling unsafe and unprotected, they also took note of their peers who committed suicide, unable to face the cruelty and fear any longer.

Tom Beddingfield, 19, of San Jose, told of his boyfriend, Brandon. "We both came out in our junior year of high school," Beddingfield said. "We both had to deal with physical and verbal harassment from everyone."

"Brandon killed himself on March 9, 1996. He was 16. A month later I became an activist for gay and lesbian youth. I do it so that what happened to my boyfriend might not happen to someone else."

A fact sheet passed out to legislators and Capitol staff listed needs and demands, including comprehensive policies banning harassment, violence, and intimidation against students on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation; funding for training teachers and school staff in crisis intervention, conflict resolution, harassment and violence prevention, and sensitivity training on GLBT issues; funding for state-supported social research on violence and harassment in California's schools; and the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity in all non-discrimination policies of the California Education Code.

As their airplanes and buses left Sacramento, participants took with them important new skills and an even stronger commitment to seeing that policies are put into place that protect their rights, and the rights of those who come after them, to learn in a safe and supportive environment.

(excerpted and reprinted from The Bay Area Reporter)

STONE BUTCH BLUES: A NOVEL BY LESLIE FEINBERG

A Review by M'Lynn Hartwell

The first time I read *Stone Butch Blues*, I cried with compassion and shame at my own gender misconceptions. It was then, that I realized that the transgendered community was in many ways a kindred spirit to the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual community, and that their struggle, was our struggle for basic human rights and the dignity of being.

Stone Butch Blues is Leslie Feinberg's autobiographical, and generally torturous tale of confused sexual identity—feeling male in a female body. Feinberg writes about the experience of trying to live honestly with who you are, rather than within the narrow societal constraints ascribed to the sex indicated on your birth certificate. This is trickier than you might think. Leslie weaves her way through her search for "the right place," and s/he does it with both philosophy and the brutal honesty. The fact that this book was depressing, and painful to read at times, only reflects the reality of the world s/he had to face.

Stone Butch Blues is also a historical first-hand accounting filed with tales of Stonewall-period police abuse, and love gone wrong. The book is alive with honesty and gentleness. Feinberg's alter ego, Jess Goldberg, wants only to love freely and be loved and live as who s/he is. Her touching, and sometimes amusing attempts to do so, hold together the narrative of her first twenty-some years, in Buffalo, and New York City. The story of what Jess does not have, and what is taken from her, is heartbreaking. Nevertheless, Feinberg is always there to hold our broken hearts together and make them whole with moments of love and wonder at the beauty of the world—from Jess' touching date with a woman who believes Jess, is a man, to a scene on a Manhattan subway platform where s/he hears Mozart played for the first time, by street musicians. Interwoven within the story of Jess' coming of age sexually, runs the story of her awakening to the world of blue collar labor relations and union activism.

I highly recommend this book!

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There is a verse in the Bible in the book of I John chapter 4 and verse 18 that says "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love." I would like to suggest that as we examine the "coming out" issue, we consider the possibility that the reason we are unable to do so is from a basic, gut fear. Are we afraid of what might happen out in our society or are we really afraid of having to face and accept ourselves as God made us?"

Is the agony and torture we experience there because we carry inside ourselves the knowledge that we are GLTB and are unable to come to terms with it? We will never find the attitudes of society changing towards us as GLTB's until we can at least come to terms with our attitudes about ourselves. I admit that I occasionally find a homophobic attitude still inside my mind and I have to deal with it when it pops up (or get help dealing with it!). The same God that said that nothing can separate us from that God's love (Romans 8:35-39) also said that we are to love the "Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."

May I offer to you the thought that fundamentalists, right-wing straight people, or any others who are "hateful" in their attitudes and language to us (and, incidentally to anyone else who does not agree with them), may be suffering from an inability to love themselves in a wholesome way. If these groups of Scriptures say anything to us even symbolically, they point to the possibility that without a proper self-love, it is impossible to love either the human or the divine appropriately. Our inability to love ourselves, then, may cause us to constantly stand outside the welcoming love that awaits us in different segments of society, and within the fellowship of some churches. Bottom line: Learn to love yourself for the fabulous person you are and are meant to be!

Journey In Light Ministries, Inc. is a welcoming and affirming Christian fellowship that meets the first and third Sundays of the month in the basement community room of the Suttons Bay Library at 10:30 a.m. (side entrance). Everyone is welcome! For more information you may call 271-2529 or write to

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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 50729, 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 810-398-7105
<http://www.webspace.com/~tcc/affirmations/index.htm>
Lansing Association of Human Rights
P.O. Box 18062, Lansing, MI 48826 517-332-3200
e-mail lahr@macatawa.org
Lesbian Connection
P.O. Box 811, East Lansing, MI 48826 517-371-5257
Triangle Foundation (Lesbian/Gay Foundation of Michigan)
19641 W. Seven Mile Rd., Detroit 48219 313-537-3323
..... Fax: 313-537-3379
email trijeffm@aol.com
Between The Lines (newspaper/monthly) 810-615-7003
33528 Eight Mile, Ste. 185A3, Livonia, MI 48152 ... FAX 810-615-7018
e-mail pridepbllis@aol.com
The Third Coast (magazine/monthly)
POB 7296, Grand Rapids, MI 49510 616-248-9967
Michigan Pride, Inc. (Statewide Pride March organization)
P.O. Box 16191, Lansing, MI 48901 517-371-8466
..... pride@michiganpride.org

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 212-809-8585 x 205
120 Wall St., NY, NY 10005 Fax: 212-890-0055
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
e-mail www@hrcusa.org
Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, Political Action Committee
1012 14th St. NW #707, Washington, DC 20005 202-842-7679
GLSEN, Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network 212-727-0135
121 West 27 Street Suite 804, NY, NY 10001 Fax: 212-727-0-254

LOCAL SPIRITUAL:

Rev. Geraldine Colvin
Unity Church, 3600 Five Mile, Traverse City 616-938-9587
Rev. Emmy Lou Belcher
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Grand Traverse
6726 Center Rd., Traverse City—Home: 938-9078 ... Office: 947-3117
Rev. Nancy Hayward, Circle of the Sacred Earth 616-223-7999
Rev. Linda L. Wilson, Journey In Light Ministries 616-271-2529
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Petoskey 616-347-8916
P.O. Box 873 Petoskey, MI 49770

LOCAL COUNSELING:

Third Level Crisis Intervention, 616-922-4800
1022 E. Front St., TC, MI 49686 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
Joanna T. Lauber, MA, OTR, CHt 616-947-8842
Barbara Jones Smith, PHD 616-947-1444
Elizabeth Most, MSW, ACSW (Petoskey) 616-439-0656
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 906-635-9263
Lois Martindale, Ph.D., Benzonia 616-882-5888
CDRS (a free substance abuse referral agency)
808-A S. Garfield, Traverse City 929-1315 or 800-686-0749

LOCAL SERVICE / SOCIAL / POLITICAL

Friends North (information line) 616-946-1804
Common Voices - F/N Rap Group Ed - 947-4697
..... Tom - 275-6127
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
..... jdevans@gtii.com
..... Hilda 616-938-1294
P-FLAG, Traverse City, POB 1705, Acme, MI 49610 . Cindy 616-271-5045
GLSEN (Gay/Lesbian/Straight Education Network)
PO Box 9, Traverse, MI 49685 616-943-5050
NOW (National Organization for Women) Gail Trill 616-938-1333

LOCAL HIV/AIDS HEALTH COUNSELING:

HIV/AIDS Wellness Networks, GTA, Inc., 616-947-1110
P.O. Box 1632, Traverse City, MI 49685 1-800-494-1160
Business Office 616-933-0279
HIV/AIDS Wellness Networks - HIV Support Group and
Family and Significant Other Support Group 616-947-1110
Thomas Judd Care Center, 1211 W Front St., Traverse City,
Mary Dillinger, RN, Clinical Nurse Specialist 616-935-8140
David Rushlow, ACSW Social Worker 616-935-6385
H.A.N.D.S. (HIV/AIDS Support: Petoskey) 1-800-248-6777
Community Health Clinic 616-929-4448
(anonymous counseling/testing; same-day results no fee)
Northern Michigan Planned Parenthood 616-929-1844
(anonymous counseling & testing)
Grand Traverse County Health Department 616-922-4831
(anonymous HIV Testing Center)
Emmet County Health Department (Petoskey) 616-347-6014
Also call the District Health Department in your area