

A Time For Unity

By Alan Collard



Dear Friends...

I want to take this time to talk to you about the importance of unity in our community. With the anti-gay vote in Traverse City this November I feel we all need to come together. The "City Proposal 1", is aimed at taking away our rights. An anti gay group downstate is working hard to make it legal to basically discriminate against Gay's, Lesbian's, Bi-sexual's, and Transgendered person's in the city of Traverse City.

This group is definitely unified in their cause. They have the money to work at getting this proposal passed. My concern is this: are we unified and dedicated to fight for our rights as human beings that just happen to have a different sexual orientation than the American Family Association? I was a little disappointed that more of us didn't come to the Pride Day this year. We all need to show support!

Last year was the first pride day celebration I attended. Before that I was a little apprehensive at "being seen" at a Gay event out in public! I thought "Oh my God, there will be cameras and protestors!" Well guess what? There were none! Instead I had a great time and met new friends!

Part of the problem as I see it is, is that the gay community is divided into our own

little groups here in northern Michigan. For years when I would talk to patrons of the bar about Friends North, they would say, "Oh you don't want to join them, they're all stuck up!" I guess they felt since members of Friends North didn't frequent the bar that they were "cliquey". Well I have been a member for over a year now and I have met some of the best friends I will ever know!

Another problem is that some of us, as I used to, live our lives trying to make sure others are comfortable with our lifestyle. I used to be closeted and was a member of a church that denounced homosexuality. I volunteered a lot of my time and donated a lot of my money, trying to fit in and cure my true feelings, and what I believe God's plan is for me. The day I finally left my church, the Pastor had a sermon on how we should vote in the election. He had different criteria, and one of them was the issue of homosexuality. He stated that if a politician supported "GAY RIGHTS", we should not support that individual. By that time my pastor knew that I was gay, and was trying to get me to join Exodus. I left that day and have never gone back!

We all need to realize that our money and our actions are very important. We have a lot of power too! We pay more taxes than most, as we have less deductions and rights than heterosexual couples do. Stop giving your money to group's that support "Hate Legislation". My

church supported Rev. Jerry Farwell. I can't stand the thought that I helped his fight against you and I!

Please get involved!!!! Volunteer your time, donate money to TCCAD (Traverse City Campaign Against Discrimination), register to vote, and get down to the polls and vote. Voting is easy and actually fun. Go as a group of friends, make it a celebration! Have a party afterwards.

For those of you who are closeted, coming out is not that hard! Scary yes, and emotional too! If you have good people in your life that truly love you, and care about you, it will be all right! It was the best thing I ever did in my life! I got rid of a lot of stress, and I am following God's plan for me! Not prejudice persons of Earth who have their own sexuality questions about themselves.

**Gay? Lesbian?
Bisexual?
Transgendered?**

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FRIENDS NORTH

AN ASSOCIATION OF GAY MEN, LESBIANS, BISEXUALS, TRANSGENDERED, AND THEIR FRIENDS

The Mission of Friends North of Michigan, Inc., is to provide social, educational and support activities and opportunities for the gay men, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered communities in Northern Michigan.

Please note: Friends North is not a dating, nor dating referral service.

Networking 45° North is the newsletter of Friends North of Michigan, Inc. For information, write to Friends North, PO Box 562, Traverse City, MI 49685-0562.

www.friendsnorth.org

Viewpoints expressed in Networking do not necessarily represent those of the Board of Trustees or the general membership.

Friends North of Michigan, Inc., is an association of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered and their friends from Northwestern Lower Michigan centered in Traverse City. Friends North provides social activities, a newsletter, an information line, workshops, a web site and a scholarship fund for financial assistance.

Friends North's Board of Trustees is elected each December at the Annual Meeting. Regular Board meetings are held at Grace Episcopal Church, at the corner of Washington and Boardman Streets in Traverse City, at 6:30 pm on the 1st Tuesday of every month except July. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please contact Friends North in writing ahead of time if you have an item for the agenda. Current members of the Board include:

Tom Kincaid, President, (231) 929-2919

Gwen Sanford, Vice President, (231) 946-0433

Toni Poole, Secretary,

Richard Pozniak, Treasurer, (231) 933-3969

Bob Buck, Trustee, 7 Bowerman Rd. Mansitee, MI 49660

Dianna Johnson, Trustee, (231) 933-0571

Joe Kaubenaw, Trustee, (231) 947-8402

Craig Philip Richard, Trustee, (231) 922-1967

Alan Collard, Trustee, (231) 941-9110

David Hummel, Trustee, (231) 929-1226

The Friends North Newsletter Committee is responsible for the publication of Networking 45° North.

Publisher: Gwen Sanford, GwenChris@worldnet.att.net

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Contributions to Networking are welcome. Letters, essays, features, reflections, poetry, original art work etc. should be sent to Networking 45° North, PO Box 562, Traverse City, MI 39685-0562, or to either the publisher or editor listed above. 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. Please include your name, address and a phone number where you can be reached. If you would like your contribution to be printed anonymously, please let us know.

Address Changes should be sent to the above address.

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Distribution: Networking is sent via bulk mail in a plain envelope to subscribers. Additional copies are available at select local establishments.



From The President By Tom Kincaid

Well, what a couple of months this has been. In May, Friends North held our annual High Tea which was a resounding success. The following weekend we held our annual Gay Pride Day. Even though it rained cats, dogs and triangles, several people turned out and Pride was a success. While it was raining, the committee managed to carry on all of their planned activities.

I want to comment on something that took place at Pride Day. I have had several phone calls and 2 letters about the simulated sex act that took place between one of the entertainers and one of the audience members. While Friends North does not specifically endorse or approve of acts like this, it was done, I hope in good clean fun.

The single most important event to happen to the Traverse area GLBT community is happening in November. For those of us residing in the City of Traverse City, you have the opportunity to vote no on an issue that would PERMANENTLY allow discrimination in our community. You may have heard of it as "Vote yes for

equal rights, not special rights." Heck, this anti-gay group even got signatures from people in the GLBT community because of the spin that they put on their rhetoric. If the majority of Traverse City votes yes, the city charter will be amended so that sexual orientation can never be part of the discrimination code. An amendment similar to this has already passed in Royal Oak which is a city known for its gay friendliness. Please register and VOTE NO. For more information please call TCCAD (Traverse City Campaign for Discrimination) at (231)883-1058, or on the Web at www.TCCAD2000.org. Remember vote NO or a year from now if you live in Traverse City you actually could lose your job or lose your home because you are gay and you will have no legal recourse.

Please call me if you have any questions.

We still need volunteers for our committees and would love to have you join us.

Tom Kincaid
231/ 929-2919

Treasurer Report

By Richard Pozniak

Summer is upon us and we have had two big events since the last newsletter. The High Tea and Pride Day. The High Tea was a financial success. We took in \$5,150.99, which included table sponsors, ticket sales, and, of course, the auction. After expenses included rental of the Opera House, Dinnerware and linen rentals, and food which came to \$1664.88 it. We cleared \$3,486.11.

Pride Day was also a success considering the bad weather. Although this event is not meant to be a money-maker, we try to at least break even. As of yet all the bills for that event are not in.

Money is coming in for the Bike Tour and it looks like we will have lots of bike riders again this year.

Expenses this month have been for Insurance for the year's events, High Tea expenses, phone bills and printing/ mailing of the newsletter. So as of June 1st we have \$5,012.25 in the bank.

I'd like to thank all the sponsors of the High Tea, Pride Day for there donations and to all those that gave many things for the High Tea Auction. I look forward to seeing all of you at the Bike Tour the last weekend in July.

Treasurer Report

By Richard Pozniak

Friends North had a total of \$11,753.25 deposited in June and July. It was High Tea, Pride and Membership money but most came from the Bike Tour.

I wrote checks totaling \$5,000 for Pride, phone and mostly the Bike Tour bills. This left a total of \$6,247.65 in the bank. We still have bills, like printing, mailing and phone to pay and no fund raisers scheduled for the rest of the year.

So keep your fingers crossed that we stay in the black by the end of the year.

The Bike Tour was a great event again this year. It seems to get better each year.



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Mail this form and your check to **Friends North Inc.** PO Box 562 Traverse City, MI 49685-0562 Attn: Memberships

Friends North's membership list is strictly confidential, and mail from Friends North is sent in plain envelopes.

Minutes of the June 5, 2001 Board Meeting

Held at Grace Episcopal Church Basement, 341 Washington Street, Traverse City, MI

Prepared by Toni Poole, Secretary

Board Members Present: Tom Kincaid, Gwen Sanford, Richard Posniak, Dianna Johnson, Toni Poole, Craig Richard, Bob Buck, Alan Collard, Joe Kaubenaw

Others Present: Nancy and Rose

Board Members Absent: Al Kitzmiller

Meeting called to order at 6:33PM

- Richard gave a Treasurer's Report. He stated \$5368.25 in bank as of June 5th. Richard reported \$3486.11 made from High Tea.
- Minutes of the May 1st board meeting were reviewed.
 - **Motion by Joe to accept the minutes, seconded by Toni, carried unanimously.**
- Tom talked about success of High Tea. Toni asked why there wasn't more entertainment as expected. Discussion tabled.
- Joe talked briefly about Pride. No final numbers yet. Enough t-shirts were sold to break even on them.
- Nancy gave Bike Tour report.
 - 43 riders so far registered.
 - A possible new caterer has been located – "Hungry Tummy".
 - Next Bike Tour meeting is June 19th at 7:00PM on the land.
 - A contest is being held for a logo to go on the t-shirts.
 - Rose notes that the current numbers of rider registrations will allow event to break even.
 - Gwen asked about cost breakdowns – Nancy will get info.
 - Tom asked if volunteers are needed. Nancy replied in the affirmative.
 - Alan brought up subject of possible massages at Bike Tour. Nancy indicated that much thought was given to it, and questioned if it might raise problems if other vendors wished to provide services in the future. Much discussion ensued. More thought will be given to it.
- Craig talked about a fictional story he submitted to each board member in advance of the meeting, and requested feedback on whether it is appropriate to include in newsletter.
 - Much discussion ensued. General feeling was that it was not appropriate due to some adult oriented content.
 - **Motion to reject request to put story in newsletter by Toni, seconded by Alan. Motion passes 8-1.**
- Dianna gave newsletter report.
 - Only received one article to date.
 - Discussion ensued on timing, pushing deadline back, etc.
 - Alan suggested going to 4 newsletters per year but distributing over a wider area of the state.
 - Diane indicated she would like to see all articles submitted by June 13th.
- Tom brought up phone bill.
 - Total monthly bill is \$90.41. Breakdown is \$47/mo for phone bill, \$30/mo for yellow page ad, and \$13.41/mo for AT&T bill.
 - All discussed options to reduce bill. Thoughts: disconnect phone completely, eliminate the 800 number. Much discussion ensued.
 - **Motion to disconnect 800 line by Tom, seconded by Joe, carried unanimously.**
 - **Motion to disconnect phone completely by Bob, seconded by Alan. More discussion ensued. Motions fails 4-5.**
 - Tom suggests forming a committee to investigate phone problems, options, and needs. Suggests Toni as chair of committee.
 - **Motion to create Phone Line Committee chaired by Toni by Bob, seconded by Joe, carried unanimously.**
- Tom brought up MDOT cleanup.
 - Next dates are July 14th-July 22nd.
 - Craig volunteered to head up project.
 - Established date/time of July 17th at 6:30PM to meet at old theater in Acme for all who wish to participate.
- Craig brought up subject of newsletter subscriptions. Suggests we act on expired subscriptions.
 - Tom suggested appointing Craig chair of a newly formed Newsletter Committee, with initial goal of weeding out expired subscriptions.
 - Dianna suggested we do not need a committee to do this. Much discussion ensued.
 - **Motion to form a Newsletter Committee chaired by Craig by Tom, seconded by Joe. Motion fails 4-5.**
 - More discussion ensued.
 - **Motion to insert newsletters with warning notice to unpaid subscribers by Bob, seconded by Dianna. More discussion ensued. Motion amended to insert newsletter of only subscribers unpaid from 1997 back. Carried unanimously.**
 - Craig asked if we are printing too many newsletters. Tom will investigate and come up with solid number to print.
- Tom informed all that Joanne Ewing has recently had a heart attack.
 - **Motion by Tom to spend \$50 for flowers for her, seconded by Dianna, carried unanimously.**

Moved to adjourn at 8:17PM by Joe, seconded by Alan, carried unanimously.



Minutes of the August 7, 2001 Board Meeting

Held at Grace Episcopal Church Basement, 341 Washington Street, Traverse City, MI

Prepared by Toni Poole, Secretary

Board Members Present: Tom Kincaid, Gwen Sanford, Richard Posniak, Toni Poole, Craig Richard, Bob Buck, Alan Collard, Joe Kaubenaw

Others Present: Paul Heaton, David Hummel, Rose, Mary Ann

Board Members Absent: Al Kitzmiller, Dianna Johnson

Meeting called to order at 6:31PM

- Minutes of the June 5th board meeting were reviewed.
 - **Motion by Joe to accept the minutes, seconded by Richard, carried unanimously.**
- Richard gave a Treasurer's Report. He stated \$6247.65 in bank as of August 7th.
- Paul Heaton talked about and gave an update on the Traverse City Campaign Against Discrimination (TCCAD).
 - City commission denounced Proposal 1 by a 5-2 vote at the August 6th meeting.
 - NGLTF has awarded a \$5000 matching grant to TCCAD.
 - Paul asks Friends North for a donation. Discussion ensued.
 - Paul asks the board to commit to a phone bank/canvass one evening.
- Mary Ann from Andy Mitchell's (CPA) office talked about the processing of FN's 501C3 application.
 - Mary Ann talked about the liability of the current FN accounts, as several people that aren't on the board are authorized signers on the accounts.
 - Mary Ann discussed the Friends North of Michigan Inc. name, and how it would need to be registered with the State of Michigan by filing a Michigan Annual Return. She presented an MAR form for the FN officers to sign to this end.
 - Mary Ann indicated the need for FN to obtain a Federal ID#. She will handle this.
 - Mary Ann indicated the need for the Treasurer to create an anticipated budget for the upcoming year.
 - Mary Ann talked about the possibility of registering as a non-profit organization using a 501C3 designation versus 501C7. She says 501C3 is strictly for a charitable organization, while 501C7 isn't. If FN was a 501C7 organization, donations would not be tax deductible for the contributor. Much discussion ensued on this. A number of people suggested we look at other organizations of a similar nature to FN and see how they attained 501C3 status.
 - Mary Ann indicated the need to create bylaws and formally adopt them. These can be based on previous bylaws and modified. Gwen and Toni will handle the modification of these.
- Rose gave brief Bike Tour overview report. She indicated one rider required an ambulance, and one rider was verbally harassed. She will give more information next meeting.
- Joe gave a Pride wrap-up. Pride paid for itself.
 - A Pride committee separate and apart from Friends North has formed. Some discussion ensued around the Pride event not being driven by FN. This committee suggested that \$2500 be raised prior to next years event to pay for the up-front costs.
- Tom brought up subject of phone expenses. Discussed cost versus usage. In the previous month, FN received 17 calls on the line.
- Richard brought up the subject of Thank You notes. He has many, and indicates they can be used for any purpose.
- Tom brought up the subject of the MDOT pickup. Asks why it didn't happen as planned.
 - Craig indicated that an article requesting volunteers didn't make it in the newsletter, so nobody was available. Craig says the next date will definitely be met.
- Tom brought up the newsletter currently at Copyworld.
 - Talked about newsletter content, indicating that many of the articles are out of date now that the newsletter has been pushed back.
 - Richard suggested we get a newsletter out on time regardless of how much content we have. He indicates 4 pages are better than nothing.
 - Much discussion ensued around only putting out 4 newsletters per year to reduce the amount of effort needed in a volunteer organization.
 - **Motion by Richard to publish only 4 newsletters per year versus the current 6 by Richard, seconded by Toni, carried unanimously.**
 - All present agreed that the current newsletter should be in the mail by September 1st.
- The subject of a potential TCCAD donation was brought up. All present agreed that a donation was acceptable. Discussion of how much ensued.
 - **Motion by Gwen to donate \$300 to the Traverse City Campaign Against Discrimination, seconded by Joe, carried unanimously.**
- Current and absent board members were discussed briefly. David Hummel expressed a desire to be on the board.
 - **Motion by Craig to appoint David Hummel to the Friends North board, seconded by Richard, carried unanimously.**

Moved to adjourn at 8:50PM by Toni, seconded by Joe, carried unanimously.

Announcements

Hey, hey, hey!!!

Don't forget about the monthly potluck dinner held the fourth Thursday of every month. This purely social get-together starts at 6:30 PM in the cafeteria of Grace Episcopal Church.

Have you had a recent addition to your family? Did you and your partner just get hitched? Would you like to announcement an engagement but your town paper won't publish it? Send us your announcements at huntgoddess@aol.com

PFLAG MONTHLY MEETINGS

Parents, Family, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (and Bisexual & Transgendered people) meet on the third Wednesday of every month at 7:00PM. Meeting location is Third Level Crisis Center at 1022 East Front St.(enter from the alley, third building from Burger King). Program varies each month.

For more information, email joanpw@coslink.net.

Friends North Fall Hike

**October 14, 2001
12N to 4P**

@

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**Excerpt from Newsweek's
August 1st cover story,
"Scouts Divided"**

-- GREAT poll numbers -- keep on coming out, everyone! It's making a difference! - Sara

The Texas [Boy Scouts] leadership may have misjudged a cultural climate that is now more like "Dawson's Creek" than "Mayberry R.F.D." For the first time in 20 years, Gallup last month reported that the majority of Americans consider homosexuality "an acceptable alternative lifestyle." Polls show that more Americans today than ever before know someone gay. For them, the formal scouting position has caused excruciating conflicts. Sara Boesser—bsara.alaska@gci.net

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Friends North 2001 Bike Tour

History for this year — Ya shoulda been there!



The 2001 Friends North Bike Tour - the land was wonderful, bike riding excellent, dinners Friday and Saturday were delicious, a little bit of rain on Saturday night after dinner, canoeing on Sunday and then playing at the beach late Sunday morning. All with friends and family. If you have never attended a bike tour, then you are missing out on a fabulous weekend. Any one of the major components by themselves is a good time - to combine them all makes it a special weekend. Jon W. designed our t-shirts and won a free weekend, Kirk did his usual great job of getting donations, Gretchen handled a bunch of little details, Rose crunched numbers, Nancy kept Rose sane and organized, Hilda and Sheryl kept everyone fed & settled, all the bikers and campers had a good time and helped build our totem. We have a great bunch of volunteers and sag team and everyone works hard to make a good time. Next year we start in a new decade for **OUR BIKE TOUR** and we believe that this is how everyone should look at it, this is our event, our tour and it only gets better with everyone participating. So, we hope to see you next year!

We owe a special thanks to the Bike Tour Committee for their long hours of planning, hard work and tremendous dedication to make this main event come together. — pub.

LISTEN UP PEOPLE!

This goes out as a word of caution to everyone in the gay community. Please let any of your friends or acquaintances know that this IS VERY SERIOUS.

On Friday I was interviewed by Channel 7 and 4 about the rumor that the Grand Traverse County Sheriffs Department will be stepping up all undercover patrols



at the parks where gay men like to frequent for sex specifically in the area of Cass Road.

I spoke to Sheriff Scott Fewins that same day and was told basically the same thing.

Two uniformed officers had arrested two men in the full act of (well you use your imagination),

and they were both naked as jaybirds.

Now, however you feel about this type of behavior, it is against the law so please pay attention and get a room.

Please note! When gay men are frequenting a location, people notice. Some of these people will call the police. The police will respond, and if you're caught with your pants down — the big door (at the jail) will go "clang" again.— pub. & retired pol. off.

High Tea 2001

By Sheryl Layton

Every Spring for the last nine years, the glbt community has gathered at the Opera House for a somewhat formal afternoon tea. In the past two years, there has also been a live and silent auction included with the event as a major fundraiser. It's a social event where we share good food and fun entertainment.

This year's event raised almost \$3,500. The committee of 8, Sheryl Layton, Dianna Johnson, Charles Egeler, Cheryl Roulston, Gwen Sanford, Brenda Bartz, Deb Medlin, Tom Kincaid & Richard Pozniak started meeting in January to begin preparing for HighTea 2001.

A five course meal was served consisting of tea nuts, scones, finger sandwiches, salad and a knockout dessert called "Ménage a Trois." The tea nuts are a repeat performance every year; pecans rolled in a brown sugar concoction and roasted in butter. The scones' recipe came from our Tea hostess a few years ago, Michelle they dried and are

The dessert this year was knockout. We called it Menage a Trois because it had 3 different chocolates.

brushed with cream when they come out of the oven, which makes them rich and moist. The scones are served with made-from-scratch lemon curd and whipped butter. This year we made chicken salad from fresh chicken breasts, celery, ranch dressing and our secret ingredient-diced tart apples and lots of fresh chopped tarragon, dill, thyme and basil and scooped a luscious fresh croissant. The other finger sandwich is Stilton and pear con-

serve. It's hard to imagine this being something special, but if you were there, then you know what we're talking about with this one. It has cream cheese and lots of aged Stilton that Chef Charles gets from Toledo (don't ask me why it comes from there, ask him). We dice poached pears and toss it all together and spread it on wheat-nut bread. Chef Charles and I named the salad "rainbow" because it was neatly arranged with matchstick cut colorful vegetables of zucchini, yellow squash, radish and carrots and drizzled over with raspberry vinaigrette. English Breakfast and Earl Grey Tea was served with the first 4 courses and Red current tea was served with the dessert.

The dessert this year was knockout. We called it Menage a Trois because it had 3 different chocolates. We plated each dessert individually (we made 150 of these babies). We started with a rich, sweet circle of chocolate sauce, placed a chewy sugar wafer in the center of the plate and piped a rosette of double chocolate mouse on top of the cookie. We placed a handmade raspberry truffle on top of the mousse and then got funky and squirted plain old Hershey's syrup and raspberry coulees (raspberry puree) all over the place. We balanced it with a triangle of sugar wafer poked in the side of the mousse and finished it off with a sprinkle of cocoa powder. It was a work of art. Nice work kitchen team.

Princess Laura emceed the tea this year. She spiced up the show with her red & black saloon dress and rainbow under-

shirt. She hosted a gay trivia game and she also auctioneered our live auction. She added a lot of laughs and color to our event. Thank you Princess Laura.

Richard Pozniak recruited 5 of his friends, choreographed and starred in the "Half Monty." We had a lot of fun with that. They danced and took off half of it all to the tune of "Heard it through the Grapevine." It was wonderfully enjoyable and fun.

There was a silent auction again this year with over 30 items that were donated from members and businesses of the community. Support those businesses and business owners that support our community! Thank you Charles Egeler at **Chef Charles**, Princess Laura and Capt. Dave at **Nauticat Catamaran Gay Cruises**, Sheryl Layton at **Charles Layton Chocolates**, Allan Collard, C.M. T., Victoria, Rosalyn Tyge at **Tyge Tile**, Mike Negel Massage, Dave Rinckey, Gwen Sanford and Carol Larson, **Borders Books**, **Barker Creek Nursery**, Brenda Bartz, Todd McMillen at **The Instant Framer**, Sheila McRae, **Chateau Grand Traverse**, Kristi Brubaker at **Leelanau Interiors**, Erika, Yola and Petra at the **Silver Swan**, **Wild Birds Unlimited**, **Krystal Miller's Handmade Handbags**, Esther Parzych, Julie Lahaye at **Fabulous Nails**, Marge Phillips, **Ultimate Fitness**, Joe Breech and Paula Gale at **Complete Body Work & Massage Therapy**, **Candle Factory**, **Jen Tees**, **Mirage Tanning Salon**, Richard Pozniak, Kirk Day at **Kirk Day Design**, David Schultz and Jim Walker at the **Bellaire Bed & Breakfast**, Fred Farage and Carl Strebel, **The Bellaire Inn and Restaurant**.

Continued page 10, see High Tea

Richard Pozniak recruited 5 of his friends, choreographed and starred in the "Half Monty."

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High Tea 2001 Continued from page 9

Thank you to our table sponsors: Lisa Aragona-King at Matrix Financial Group, Copy World, Jen Tees, Kim Gower at Business Clarity, Barker Creek Nursery, Andrew L. Mitchell and Associates, Linda Zajac & Tom Elliot at Century 21, Charles Egeler and his crew at Chef Charles, Dr. Suzette Corbit, D.C., Joe Breech and Paula Gale at Complete Body Work & Massage Therapy, and Todd McMillen at Instant Framer. The table sponsors make it possible for our guests to enjoy the High Tea with china and linens. It's so important for us to celebrate our community with class. We deserve it.

Thanks to all who contributed, to all who volunteered and especially those whose hard work on the committee made it all possible. Oh, and of course to our perennial Tea Captain. Tom Kincaid. Well Done! High Tea 2001!



Same-Sex Couples Continued from page 3

***In Indiana, a 428 percent increase, from 1,935 to 10,219 same-sex partner households.

***In Louisiana, a 562 percent increase, from 1,331 to 8,808 same-sex partner households.

***In Massachusetts, a 229 percent increase, from 5,194 to 17,099 same-sex partner households.

***In Montana, a 326 percent increase, from 286 to 1,218 same-sex partner households.

***In Nebraska, a 413 percent increase, from 455 to 2,332 same-sex partner households.

***In Nevada, a 711 percent increase, from 613 to 4,973 same-sex partner households.

Released on June 13:

***In Delaware, a 781 percent increase, from 212 to 1,868 same-sex partner households.

***In Vermont, a 422 percent increase, from 370 to 1,933 same-sex partner households.

Founded in 1973, NGLTF works to eliminate prejudice, violence and injustice against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people at the local, state and national level. As part of a broader social justice movement for freedom, justice and equality, NGLTF is creating a world that respects and celebrates the diversity of human expression and identity where all people may fully participate in society.

To reach the NGLTF Communications Department at NGLTF, please call David Elliot, Communications Director, at 202-332-6483 x3303 or pager 800-757-6476 or email delliot@ngltf.org.

NGTLF Awards TCCAD \$5,000 Grant

The TC Campaign Against Discrimination is delighted to share two pieces of good news with our supporters and volunteers.

—The Traverse City Commission voted to denounce Proposal 1 and encourage people to vote no.

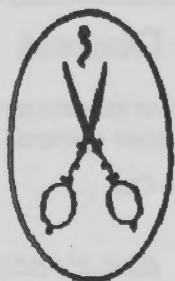
—The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force announced that it will award TCCAD \$5000 toward our efforts to defeat Proposal 1.

It is important to note that we need to match this grant with local dollars, and encourage you to help identify people who might be able to write a \$500 or \$1000 check.

It is also important to note that this grant comes because the NGTLF believes we are running a very organized campaign that has a good chance of winning...if we continue to focus on talking directly to voters, as has been our strategy.

Based on our review of records from other campaigns, we know that our opponents will receive many thousands of dollars from the AFA and other organizations in the last days of the campaign, so this seed money is very important to our success.

Thanks for your assistance in helping us match the grant.



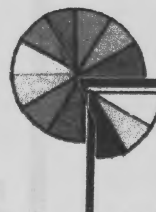
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NGLTF Awards TCCAD \$5,000 Grant

NGLTF Announces Grants to Help Local Communities Fight Anti- Gay Ballot Measures

MEDIA CONTACT:

David Elliot, Communications Director
delliot@ngltf.org
202-332-6483, ext. 3303
Pager: 800-757-6476

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force today announced its first two grants to local communities facing ballot initiatives that threaten the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. NGLTF announced it will award \$20,000 to Basic Rights Oregon and \$5,000 to Traverse City Campaign Against Discrimination.

Oregon, which has experienced 33 GLBT-related ballot measures since 1988 on the local and state level, is now facing a potential statewide effort in 2002 to ban the positive or neutral mention of homosexuality in public schools. Traverse City is voting this November on a proposed city charter amendment that would ban the enactment of any nondiscrimination law covering gay, lesbian or bisexual people. Two other Michigan cities - Kalamazoo and Huntington Woods - also face anti-GLBT ballot measures this November.

NGLTF expects to announce an additional \$75,000 in local grants later this year. The Task Force is the only national organization that provides electoral training on an ongoing basis in how to defeat anti-GLBT ballot initiatives.

"This grant money will help our state and local partners work to defeat measures that threaten our communities," said NGLTF Executive Director Lorri L. Jean. "We are particularly committed to helping

the campaigns that are willing to do the critical work of building a list of gay and pro-gay voters who we can then turn out to vote in every election. This 'voter I.D.' work is essential to win elections."

Jean noted that since 1998, 19 GLBT-related measures have been voted on in the United States. Only in five of the 19 elections have GLBT activists prevailed. "In both Oregon and in Traverse City, local leaders have made the extraordinary commitment to running strong campaigns and doing the on-the-ground organizing that is so often neglected," Jean said.

"This grant makes it possible for us to get an early start in our campaign," said Roey Thorpe, executive director of Basic Rights Oregon. "The right-wing assault in Oregon has implications for the entire nation, and we are committed to defeating this assault again this year. NGLTF has given us many kinds of support over the years, including technical assistance and training. We are thrilled to be recognized in this way, and grateful for NGLTF's vision and understanding of the importance of this work."

"We plan to use NGLTF's gift to solicit matching funds from local donors," said Bonnie Deigh, co-chair of the Traverse City Campaign Against Discrimination. NGLTF's belief in our ultimate success at the polls assures our grassroots supporters that their individual contributions will be money well spent. We deeply appreciate NGLTF's great vote of confidence."

To contribute or volunteer for Basic Rights Oregon, call 503-222-6151, email roey@basicrights.org or visit www.basicrights.org.

To contribute or volunteer for Traverse City Campaign Against Discrimination, call 231-883-1058, email info@tccad2000.org or visit www.tccad2000.org.

To read NGLTF's Rethinking Elections: An Op-Ed Series on Critical Electoral Battles Facing GLBT Communities, please visit www.ngltf.org/library/rethink.htm.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has worked to eliminate prejudice, violence and injustice against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people at the local, state and national level since its inception in 1973. As part of a broader social justice movement for freedom, justice and equality, NGLTF is creating a world that respects and celebrates the diversity of human expression and identity where all people may fully participate in society.

*Your
Article
Could
Begin
Here*

Transgender Corner

OPINION | Lesbian Notions Are Transsexual Women "Real" Women? Yes.

by Paula Martinac
April 17, 2001

Are transsexual women "real" women? It's a tedious question that male-to-female transsexuals often run up against when they're open and honest about their personal history. But the life experiences of many MTFs make them more aware of how gender roles and sexism work than a lot of so-called "real" women.

I've never met a transsexual woman who didn't have a feminist consciousness. I'm sure there are some, but it makes perfect sense that many trans-women would be attracted to feminism as a philosophy. After all, feminism by definition seeks to break down the barriers society has set up based on gender.

It's infuriating, then, that some feminists and lesbians continue to question the "womanhood" of MTFs. I support the concept of "women-only space," but I'm concerned that this legitimate policy is sometimes used to discriminate against trans-women.

The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, for example, still maintains a policy of trans-exclusion that sounds eerily like the "don't ask, don't tell"

policy of the U.S. military. An official festival handout states, "No woman's gender will be questioned on the land." However, the flyer goes on, the festival has the right to deny admission "to individuals who self-declare as male-to-female transsexuals." In theory, one of Fred Phelps's daughters could attend Michigan, while an open feminist trans-woman could not.

In another galling example, a women's rape crisis center in British Columbia recently refused to allow Kimberly Nixon, a transsexual woman, to train as a peer counselor. The staff assumed she wouldn't understand violence against women because she was born male. According to a center spokesperson, Nixon could not possibly have faced the unique mix of social, psychological, and biological factors that "shape women's experiences and ... the world's perception of us."

But, in fact, the experience of many transsexual women turns the meaning of being "born" female or male upside down. Many MTFs talk about knowing they were "female" from a very young age. "Growing up," Nixon told a reporter for Canadian Press, "I had the sense and burden of being female and the burden of being aware of ... all the issues women deal with."

The exclusionary policies that feminist and lesbian groups institute toward transsexual women rest on two false premises. First of all, because the world once viewed MTFs as boys and men, it's assumed that they enjoyed male privilege. Yet the opposite may actually be true, given the many stories transsexual

women tell about the intense gender oppression they experienced before surgery.


According to Australian trans-feminist Julie Peters, transgender male youth tend to be regarded "as feminine or different boys and are denied entry into male power structures; they are vilified, ostracized, and bashed." Misunderstood or rejected by their families, they sometimes take to the streets, where they're at high risk for drugs and prostitution and often learn early on about sexual violence, just like many girls do.

The second false premise is that only "real" women can fully comprehend female oppression. But what about the "real" women who think feminism has nothing to do with their lives? And don't forget the "women-born women" who actively oppose abortion rights, or who accept their church's dictate that wives submit to their husbands, or who voted for George W. Bush.

Now compare those "real" women with trans-activist Riki Wilchins, Executive Director of GenderPAC. In a recent editorial, Wilchins called on activists to build "a broad-based and inclusive national movement for gender rights." Gender, Wilchins states, is a basic human right that unites everyone from "a boy-dyke with buzz-cut blue hair" to "an FTM fired for transitioning on the job" to "a soccer mom banging her head on the glass ceiling" to "a gay man gender-bashed ... because some bigot thinks homosexuals are unmanly."

We can learn a lot from reading the work

Continued on page 15, see "Real Women"





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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
2	3 Windfire	4 FN Board Mtg. 6:30 PM @ Grace Episcopal	5 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	6	7	8 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
9	10 Windfire	11	12 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	13	14	15 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
16	17 Windfire	18	19 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace PFLAG 7:00 PM @ Third Level Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	20	21	22 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
23	24 Windfire	25	26 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	27 Potluck Social 6:30 PM @ Grace Episcopal	28	29 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
30						

October 2001



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Windfire	2 FN Board Mtg. 6:30 PM @ Grace Episcopal	3 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	4	5	6 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
7	8 Windfire	9	10 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	11	12	13 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
14 Fall Hike @ Bahle's Warm- ing Hut 12-4 pm	15 Windfire	16	17 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace PFLAG 7:00 PM @ Third Level Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	18	19	20 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
21	22 Windfire	23	24 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	25 Potluck Social 6:30 PM @ Grace Episcopal	26	27 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
28	29 Windfire	30	31 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P			

November 2001



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
4	5 Windfire	6 FN Board Mtg. 6:30 PM @ Grace Episcopal	7 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	8	9	10 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
11	12 Windfire	13	14 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	15	16	17 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
18	19 Windfire	20	21 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace PFLAG 7:00 PM @ Third Level Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	22 Potluck Social 6:30 PM @ Grace Episcopal	23	24 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
25	26 Windfire	27	28 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	29	30	

December 2001



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
2	3 Windfire	4 ANNUAL FN Board Mtg. 6:30 PM @	5 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	6	7	8 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
9	10 Windfire	11	12 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	13	14	15 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
16	17 Windfire	18	19 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace PFLAG 7:00 PM @ Third Level Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	20	21	22 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
23	24 Windfire	25	26 LAMBDA AA 5:30 PM @ Grace Friends U.P. North Perry Hotel @ 7:00P	27 Potluck Social 6:30 PM @ Grace Episcopal	28	29 LAMBDA AA 11:00 AM @ Grace
30	31 Windfire					

The Creation Mythos As It Was Written In The Atlantean Texts

By James Amidon

In The Beginning
Was The Spirit of All
That Was, Is, or Will Be.
And The Spirit Stirred
For It Sensed Its Entirety
And In Its Entirety Was
All That Is.

Yet,
It Felt Incomplete.
It Had No Perception
Beyond "Self,"
No Concept of "Others,"
No "Past,"
No "Present,"
No "Future."

IT,
WAS,
"Alone."
So Moved, The Spirit "Spoke"
"I Have None But Self
No Perceptions Beyond Self
Though I Am The "Finality"
I Am Unfinished

Who Am I?
What Am I?
Why Am I?
Where and When
Am I?

Why Does This Move Me
To Ponder These Questions?
The
"Answer"
Grows Clear.

Only by Multiplying "Self"
Can I Know Myself.
Only By Perceiving from
Different Points of Awareness,
From The Awareness of "Others"
Shall I Know
My Extent.

And By Multiplying "Self"
Shall I Become More Complete
By Becoming Not "Self," But
By Becoming "Other Selves"
Do I Move Toward Completion
Yea From My Being Shall
Come "The Multiverse,"
From My "Spirit" The Power
To Actualize all Concepts,
From My "Will" The Foundations
Upon Which To Build,
From My "Love" The Power
To Nurture and Sustain
"All That Is."

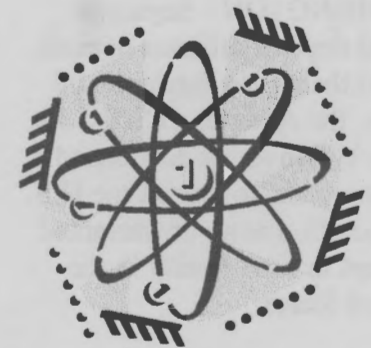
Thus in The Beginning
Were "Thought" and "Deed" As
One.

From This Came The Great
Explosion of Creation,
Concept and Deed Building
Upon Each Other Exponentially,
"Infinity" Contained
"Infinity" Unleashed.

Thus Came to Be The Multiverse.

Ever "Growing"
Ever "Changing"
Ever "Becoming"
Ever "Aware"
Ever "Now"
Yea "Realities" Without
"End."
Realities Awash in a
Sea of Infinite "Love,"
Ever Bathed in the
After glow of the
"Original" Thought
That
Birthed
Creation.
Thus "It" Was Written.


James Amidon offered his poem
as "filler" for our newsletter. I
believe this qualifies as much
more. Thank you Jim. -Pub.



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ACLU Denounces Proposed Amendment

"This amendment is the legal equivalent of a nuclear bomb....."

ACLU Denounces Proposed Amendment to US Constitution That Would Invalidate All Laws Recognizing Gay Families

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
July 11, 2001

WASHINGTON - Saying it would deprive millions of families of their most fundamental rights, the American Civil Liberties Union today denounced a new proposal to amend the U.S. Constitution as an unwarranted attempt to limit liberty in the United States.

"With only a few exceptions, most of the anti-gay attacks in Congress are the legal equivalent of sticks and stones," said Christopher E. Anders, an ACLU Legislative Counsel. "This amendment is the legal equivalent of a nuclear bomb. It will wipe out every single law protecting gay and lesbian families and other unmarried couples."

The amendment will be intro-

duced tomorrow at a Washington news conference. The ACLU said the new proposal would deprive the families of lesbians and gay men - and all other unmarried couples - of all legal protections for their relationships by overriding any federal or state constitutional protections and federal, state and local laws.

The ACLU said that the impact of the amendment would be extremely harmful. Specifically, the amendment would invalidate all state and local domestic partnership laws, including those in at least eight states and in more than 100 counties, cities and towns across the country. "The extreme measure would even prohibit state and local governments from making their own decisions on providing benefits to their employees," Anders said.

During last year's presidential campaign, Vice President Dick Cheney explicitly said that "people should be free to enter into any kind of relationship they want to enter into." He added: "different states are likely to come to different conclusions, and that's appropriate. I don't think there should necessarily be a federal policy in this area."

The ACLU said the proposed amendment would undermine state adoption, foster care and

kinship care laws. In many states, the ACLU said, unmarried persons - including unmarried relatives, heterosexual couples, gay and lesbian couples and even unrelated clergy members - have the same rights as married persons to jointly adopt or provide foster care or kinship care.

The proposed amendment would also reverse the tradition of protecting - not harming - individual liberty through constitutional amendments and of allowing states to adopt stronger civil rights protections.

"The few amendments to the Constitution that have been adopted in the last 200 years are the source of most of the Constitution's protections for individual liberty rights," Anders said. "The proposed amendment, by contrast, would deny all protection for the most personal decisions made by millions of families."

An ACLU letter to the House and Senate on the proposed amendment can be found at: <http://www.aclu.org/congress/1071101a.html>

Eric Ferrero, Public Education
Director The American Civil
Liberties Union Lesbian and Gay
Rights Project/AIDS Project
125 Broad St., 18th Floor
New York, NY 10004-2400
P: 212-549-2568; F: 212-549-2650

The above article was taken from an On-Line Newsletter published by Sara Boesser. <bsara.alaska@cgi.net>

"Real Women" Cont. from page 12

The liberation of her mind, Brevard says, took much longer than the physical reconstruction of her body.

of cutting-edge activists like Wilchins. But even older trans-women, who transitioned long before the founding of the National Organization for Women or the riots at the Stonewall Inn, have gone through their own transformative process and come out as feminists.

In an engaging new memoir called *The Woman I Was Not Born to Be*, Aleshia Brevard, a former drag performer and actor, describes her own personal journey. Glancing through the book's photos of Brevard boasting long, painted nails and a cinched-in, hourglass figure, you might be tempted to rehash the old feminist complaint that MTFs simply reinforce gender stereotypes rather than break them down.

But, in fact, Brevard has a strong feminist sensibility. After transitioning, she slowly came to realize that the role she envisioned or herself as a Donna Reed-style wife was too limited. Instead of clinging to the belief that "a good woman must be docile and long suffering" and invariably attached to a man, she recognized that she could be happily fulfilled as an independent woman.

The liberation of her mind, Brevard says, took much longer than the physical reconstruction of her body. Her experiences and those of other trans-women hold important lessons for feminists and lesbians who remain stubbornly hung up on biology.

Paula Martinac is the author of seven books, including *The Queerest Places: A Guide to Gay and Lesbian Historic Sites*. She can be reached care of this publication or at LNcolumn@aol.com.

Meijer Employee Insults Transexual

TRIANGLE FOUNDATION
RELEASE:

For immediate release: Contact: Sean Kosofsky
August 13, 2001 (313) 537-3323

SERVICE WITH A SNEER
Meijer Employee Insults Transexual

(Okemos) While shopping at the Okemos Meijer store, Michigan's most prominent transsexual activist and her friend were met with a lewd and offensive slur instead of friendly service.

Cont. Page 16, see Triangle Release

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Triangle Release Cont. from page 15

Recently Rachel Crandall and her roommate Raquel Gonzales, who are both transsexual, were degraded by a Meijer cashier, while in the check-out line. The cashier correctly assumed the two women were transgendered and then without provocation made the following statement, "It doesn't matter how you're dressed, I know you still have d*cks and you can f*ck your mamas."

Crandall and Gonzalez were shocked, offended and confused by the statement, but they immediately complained about this conduct to a manager on duty. To date, Meijer officials at that store claim that they reprimanded the employee but they have refused to formally apologize to the women for the hostile and offensive behavior of the employee.

"I couldn't believe my ears," said Crandall. "I was offended and angry that I would be treated this way by a Meijer employee. This kind of thing stays with you for awhile and cause a lot of emotional damage to people. Transgender people face this kind of discrimination, harassment, vandalism and violence every day. I am very fortunate she didn't turn violent."

Rachel Crandall, who is a therapist and the President of Transgender Michigan (Michigan's most visible and active Transgender support and advocacy organization) tried to remedy the situation on her own, and feels that she has been ignored by Meijer. So she contacted Triangle Foundation for assistance.

"This is contemptible and offensive, but certainly not the first time we have had this happen at a Meijer store," said Sean Kosofsky, Director of Policy and Victim Services for Triangle Foundation. Triangle Foundation is Michigan's statewide civil rights, advocacy and anti-violence organization for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender GLBT people. "We demand a formal apology from Meijer to Rachel and Raquel and to the entire GLBT community for what happened. We also

hope Meijer employees that cannot control their personal bigotry and offensive language should not be dealing with the public. We call on all Meijer stores and all employers to prevent these incidents by making it clear to their employees that such discrimination will not be tolerated."

Discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender expression is perfectly legal in Okemos and in Michigan, so Crandall and Gonzalez have no legal remedy for the discrimination. They and Triangle Foundation hope to raise awareness about legal discrimination and why it is a problem. There is a bill currently awaiting action in the Michigan legislature that would fix this gap in the state's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act. House Bill 4661 enjoys bi-partisan support and if passed it would ban, anti-gay and anti-transgender discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations, like Meijer stores, that are open to the public.

**If you're not out outraged,
you're not paying attention.**

Sean Kosofsky
Director of Policy and Victim
Services

Triangle Foundation
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Detroit, Michigan 48219-2721

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"Lesbian Judges Suing South African Government"

DataLounge
<http://www.datalounge.com/>
Friday, 10 August 2001

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa -- **The rights of gay and lesbian couples in South Africa could change dramatically for the better**, pending the outcome of two cases before the Pretoria High Court, the British newspaper The Telegraph reports.

The cases are noteworthy not only because they are liable to establish broad new precedents in South African law, they are unusual in that they are being filed directly by two lesbian judges.

One case involves a joint adoption petition that seeks to broaden parental rights for both gay partners; the second concerns pension and other benefits granted to spouses. Both cases challenge the constitutionality of existing laws, arguing that in their current form they discriminate against same-sex couples.

The first application is from a lesbian judge, Anna-Marie de Vos, who has asked the court to rule that she be allowed to co-adopt children with her lesbian partner. As current laws forbid such an arrangement, she's petitioning the court to have the Child Care Act declared unconstitutional.

Judge Frans Kgomo told reporters he wished to rule on the benefits petition first, noting there were many similarities between the two judges' cases.

The benefits petition filed against the president and the justice minister was brought before the court by

Cont. page 21, see Lesbian Judges

Letter Page

Friends North received this letter at the end of May from the Michigan House of Representatives Democratic Floor Leader...

Dear Friends:

In January, the Democratic Caucus of the Michigan House of Representatives released its "Quality of Life Agenda". The Oakland County delegation of the Caucus (Representatives Clarence Phillips, Nancy Quarles, Dave Woodward and I) have invited Democratic House Leader (and Detroit mayoral candidate) Kwame Kilpatrick to Oakland County to discuss that agenda with our constituents.

On Saturday, June 9, we will be hosting a "town hall meeting" to discuss quality of life issues with representatives of the Metro Detroit GLBT community. The meeting will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 am at the Pride Building in Ferndale (429 Livernois—just north of Eight Mile road). Our moderator will be State Representative Chris Kolb (D-Ann Arbor), the first openly gay member of the Michigan Legislature. This is the first time that the leaders of the House Democratic Caucus have sat down with the movers and shakers of the GLBT community, and we couldn't think of a more appropriate time than June, traditionally Gay Pride Month. I am writing to ask for your participation as a leader the GLBT community.

As Democrats, we want this event to be as inclusive as possible. Our "Quality of Life Agenda" focuses on education, economic and personal security, health care, livable communities, and preparing for the New Economy. Although we think these topics are important to every Michigan citizen, I know there are particular issues of special significance to the GLBT com-

munity. We want this town hall meeting to be a forum to discuss legislation that directly affects the GLBT community, and a forum that will allow you to tell us what state government can do to improve your quality of life.

Gild Z. Jacobs
Democratic Floor Leader

Tom responded by writing a letter to Jason Allen and CC'ing it to Gilda Jacobs, Chris Kolb, and Debbie Stabenow...

Dear Mr. Allen:

As a long time resident of Traverse City, I want to take this opportunity to write you concerning the Gay and Lesbian community in Northern Michigan.

We have a good, strong community and as you know, have lately come under fire from all sides. I am writing to request some of your time when you are in Traverse City so that we can discuss the direction the gay and lesbian community is going, the issues that we are facing, and so that we can discuss quality of life issues similar to those discussed in the Detroit area. I am enclosing the letter Friends North received from the Democratic Floor leader for you to read. As you can see, there is a meeting planned which could be and should be very productive, although because of the distance, is nearly impossible for us to participate.

Since you are our Representative, and one for all the residents of this community, gay and straight, I think as the President of Friends North, I deserve some of your time.

Thomas D. Kincaid

Guess what, Tom's still waiting for a letter from Jason..... surprised?

Gay Pride or Gay "Shame" Festival?

Something has to be done about the Gay "Pride" festival.

Once again, I was embarrassed to be at the Gay Pride festival. This is supposed to be an event to show the community of Traverse City and the surrounding communities what we are all about. Instead, it turned into another show of entertainment (?) about vulgar jokes and simulated sex acts.

Is this really how we want to present ourselves to the community? This event is attended by mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, children and friends. We should be putting our best foot forward, not presenting vulgar, lewd, sexually simulated acts. All other aspects of the festival were great. Great food, great bands, but all were marred by the vulgar entertainment.

Let's hope we get it right next year.

Gerald Houk
Traverse City

Continued page 18, see letters



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Mike Nangle
Certified Massage Therapist

Letter Page continued

Friends North!! Here to help the GLBT Community??

I turned to Friends North for help on April 1st.

I need to go to Toledo to see my mother who was ill and in a nursing home. I decided that morning to drive to Toledo to see my mother. Packed my bags, got into my car, and drove about two blocks and my car started to act up. Backfiring, etc.

I drove back to my apartment, rather dejected.

I decided to see if my neighbor, Thomas Kincaid, President of Friends North, could help me. I thought perhaps Friends North could help. Perhaps make a loan to me so that I could get my car repaired! I didn't want a hand out, just a loan.

He made a few calls and found out that Friends North couldn't do that, not in the Charter!! Friends North needs to change their Charter!

Well, I called my credit card company and asked if they could give a higher credit limit on my card due to the circumstances. They did so.

So, I rented a car, drove to Toledo, and was able to get there before my mother passed away.

I think Friends North needs to be a little more sensitive to the needs of the community! Needs to change it's CHARTER. If I didn't have a credit card, then WHAT??

Gerald L. Houk
Traverse City

Response from the FN Board—

Some time ago we had a fund to

allow members to receive money in emergency situations. When the By-Laws were changed we were unable to continue to do this.

We are taking another look at this issue, and if you have input for us to consider, please write, call or e-mail the Friends North Board members.

"Mystical Activist" By Jim Curtain Taken from an article in "Genre Magazine"

Andrew Harvey is a fearless adventurer, a determined explorer, who has searched the world for the roots of authentic spirituality. Harvey is openly gay and in a recent interview he discussed the role his homosexuality has played in his spiritual development.

Q: What role has your homosexuality played in your spiritual development?

AH: "Like so many gay people, I internalized a good deal of homophobia. Part of my early search, what drove me to India in my twenties and what drove me on the spiritual journey, was the desire to escape the agony of sexuality, the agony of the body and the desire to enter totally into some transcendent ecstasy that would, in a way, free me from emotional complexity and ambiguity. Fortunately for me, the desire was shattered when I met my husband, Eryk. Through my relationship with him, I have been able to heal the sexual wounds of my past, heal my internalized homophobia — because he has none of it — heal the body/soul/spirit and actually experience in a very intense and glorious way what has been written about in all the Tantric texts."

Q: How do you go about accomplishing this healing?

AH: "The most important lesson is to accept the (sexual) desire that is integral to being gay and to realize what its real destination is. Our responsibility is to take the whole gay experience to a whole new level of intensity and revelation. It is a very, very, difficult and refined path because just as you can be hooked on physical ecstasy, so can you be hooked on mystical ecstasy. Part of where the gay movement has stumbled, or a sign of its immaturity, has been its obsessions with the body and with sex. The best way to spirituality is to find the place of radiant balance where spirit meets body and body is infused with spirit. That place is simply love. That is a very important message to the gay movement. It's really the message of Walt Whitman. Whitman is an extraordinary pioneer in many ways, because he opens up the glory of sexuality. But that glory is always placed and experienced in the context of a profound relationship."

Q: Are you advocating monogamy?

AH: "It's not that I'm against anything. I couldn't care less about puritanical values. I'm certainly not against people experiencing anything they like, and sexual freedom is something that people are entitled to. Even promiscuity can have some revelations, but it will not produce the fullness of union that only a committed relationship can have. I think it's an important distinction because true Tantric revolution is going to be born amongst gay people. What gay people must also come gently to learn are the laws of that Tantric revolution. And the laws, as I've tried to make clear and that I've discovered for myself, are laws of dignity, of respect, of tremendous mutual honoring of fidelity, which is not a fashionable concept, but a tremendous surrendering to and worshipping of each other as divine beings. We must not confuse very exciting sexual experiences, which can lead to delight, with Tantric experience that leads to initiation and revelation. It does not mean that the sexual experience that leads to delight is something inferior or dirty. Of course not! It is a pure joy like eating a peach or listening to wonderful music. But it isn't the sacred initiation that happens at the higher level."

Cont. page 19, see *Mystical Activist*

"Mystical Activist"

Continued from page 18

Q: It seems to me that the gay community is crying out for sacred initiation. How is it achieved?

AH: " As Rilke says: 'You have to train for it.' Love requires a profound training of the spirit and a profound training of the heart. And, if you do train for it by opening your aesthetic and spiritual senses, by really experiencing the divine in your heart and by becoming aware of and experiencing your sacred creativity, then you become a full self and everyone you meet is another full self. Then the real celestial magic can begin. Gay people carry a very deep knowledge and courage of love, because to be openly gay, you have to choose love beyond all things very early on. You have to choose love beyond the dogma of your family and of society, and very often beyond the dogma of religion or the guru that you're with. You have to choose love, and that is a tremendous initiation in itself because it initiates you into the utter, divine sacredness of love.

We are at this crossroad in the gay movement. Are we going to go on celebrating narcissistic images of desire, or are we going to discover new forms of desire that are transfiguring socially, politically, sexually and artistically? Are we going to be frozen in postures of adoration of youth and physical beauty, which can be liberating, but only up to a point, or are we going to go forward into a far deeper, wilder, more socially radical, more politically explosive, more creative vision of how the gay Eros can fuel the transformation of the whole being? The Direct Path is dedicated to that transformation for straight people as well, but it is very much a prayer to all gay people to get serious about the pain of the world, to acknowledge the glory of the body and the existence of the soul, and to marry all of those recognitions with their entire lives. It must be where the gay movement is to go if it is going to claim its true radical place."

Q: You write that each religion, "in different, but fundamentally similar ways, controls believers and claims to broker the relationship between the believer and God in ways that both subtly and blatantly, keep the believer from claiming the full range of his or her innate divine powers." That has certainly been problematic for members of our community.

AH: Tragically, there is a war in all of the religions and in all of the patriarchal mystical systems between what you could call the lust for power and the authentic vision of divine equality that all mystics come to realize. What has happened over the millennia is that elites and hierarchies, both in official religions and in the esoteric branches of those official religions, have claimed either to represent the truth or to mediate the truth for other people. But the outrageous knowledge at the core of all mysticism is that we are all children of the Father/Mother, all living a totally sacred life, all connected simply in the deepest way, to the divine and, therefore, all profoundly able to empower ourselves with these sacred intensities, so as to be able to transform our lives. Well, you can see why religions and mystical systems don't want this to get out in its full outrageousness, because it simply destroys the need for all forms of hierarchy, dogma, religious elite — powers that use religion for their justification because it releases everybody into the divine ground of their own life and therefore into their divine independence, their divine creativity, their divine abandon, their divine, wild truthfulness of their own authentic selves, which makes everybody who has those traits extremely dangerous.

Q: Despite the abuses of religion, don't we still need wise teachers and guides? You acknowledge many of them in your book. I regard you as one myself.

AH: Of course, we need teachers, we need mentors, we need people to inspire us. We need people we can see further along on the path. We need to admire them, we need to learn from them, we need to revere them. What we don't need to do is deify them or idolize them or make them into icons. What we don't need to

do is worship them and give away our power to them. The relationship with a true teacher is a liberating one. The real teacher is humble. The real teacher refuses our projections.

Q: In your book you say "Humility is the beginning, the middle and the end of the path. Only God is humble enough. The more humble you become, the more you can watch the Divine manifest more richly and playfully in your mind and heart and soul and body and relationships and surroundings." There's a playfulness in you now, certainly in person, that was not always present in your writings. It is as if you are coming into the Divine Childhood that you have longed for so long.

AH: what a lovely thought. That's a very pleasant thought. I think that's why sacred marriage, in general, births the Divine Child. And I think that the freer you become, the more playful you become. Playfulness and seriousness go together, in my mind. Somebody once said to me, "Enlightenment is when you know the Mother is at home." And that means that you can play in your life. And Rama Krishna said something I have thought about all my life: "The Mother does not love those who just float out into the transcendent. The Mother really loves those who play the game wildly, who go for it." And they may fall down, they may bleed, they may suffer, they may scream. But eventually, if they do it passionately enough, they will be given enough of her joy and enough of her bliss to start to laugh and to start to play it truthfully. And I'm hoping that is where I've come to in my own life.



On The Headboard and Beside The Bed

By Dianna Johnson

1. **Lust for Life** by Irving Stone; beautifully written biography about the life of Vincent Van Gogh that includes his martyrdom as a young clergyman, his unsuccessful life as an artist (he sold only one painting in his lifetime), the madness that lead him to severe his ear, and his several affairs with less than socially acceptable women. This was one of those books that I took a long time to finish, just because I didn't want it to be over.

2. **Refuge** by Terry Tempest Williams is a book that came into my life exactly as it was supposed to. Terry Tempest Williams is an amazing writer that masterfully weaves the story of her mother dying of cancer with the flooding of the Bear River Migratory Bird Sanctuary bird refuge near the Great Salt Lake. Nature, spirituality, grief and relationships are some of the themes that run through this incredible book.

3. **Sick Puppy and Stormy Weather** by Carl Hiaasen. This guy is a completely wacky author who builds twisted characters and their most unlikely plots that evolve into something charming and almost believable. By the middle of the book I wondered exactly who the **Sick Puppy** was: the main character who is the "independently wealthy eco-terrorist Twilly Spree trying to teach a flagrant litterbug a lesson--and leaves the offender's precious Range Rover swarming with hungry dung beetles"; the pet of the offender whom Spree dognaps, or the author of the book. After reading **Stormy Weather**, I am convinced that one of the **Sick Puppies** is Hiaasen. Man, can this guy write. These are definitely a couple of books I would suggest you stash in your bag for the beach or your carry-on for a cross-country flight.

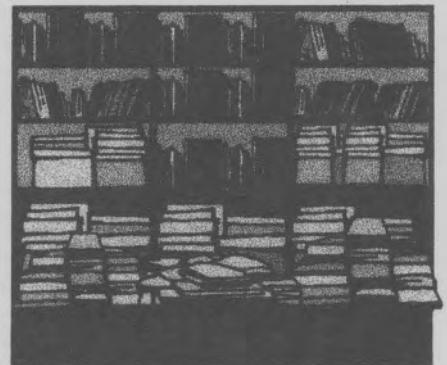
4. **The Truth is...My Life in Love and Music** by Melissa Etheridge with Laura Morton; first, I love this woman's music. Love it. And I suppose if I were looking for sensationalism, I'd like her book too. But the **Truth Is...** this book is crap. Oh sure, she reveals some of the "Little Secrets" of her life like—how she and Julie got pregnant, how she had a lot of one-nighters early in her career, the affair between Julie and kd lang, how her sister molested her (on the second or third page), and how her and Julie's relationship ended. But I thank the Goddess that this woman has a guitar to aid her pen and doesn't have to stand on the pen alone. Not exactly Pulitzer Prize material. My biggest beef with this book is the chapter where she is talking about the literary figures that influenced her life and she is trying to sound all scholarly—but out of six authors that she mentions, she spells two names wrong. Bad editing, maybe? But you would think that if one was SO influenced by others, they might at least spell their name correctly?

5. **The Ultimate Kauai Guidebook** by Andrew Doughty and Harriett Friedman; if there is any chance that you may be flying to the Garden Isle, this book is a must, and I swear a queen wrote it. The writing is so catty and bitchy and I love it. Plus, unlike Fodor's or Frommer's, this book's authors are obviously not paid by hotels and restaurants because if something is overrated or not worth the time or money, it's right there in print. Love it.

6. **Uncommon Friendship** by Frederic C. Tubach, Bernat Rosner, Sally Patterson Tubach; this story is incredible. These two men meet in California and become friends to find out that one is the son of a Nazi army officer and the other is a Hungarian-born survivor of Auschwitz. It has all of the potential of a phenomenal book but I hated reading every minute of it. Books like this piss me off because publishers and editors don't spend enough time to do it right. Why would a publisher let something this poorly written go to press when

it has so much potential? What really bugged me about it was the way that Tubach's perspective was written in first person, but Rosner's was in third person. I understand that Rosner did not want to relate to what happened at Auschwitz and kept it at a distance by reciting in third person, but it takes so much power away from his point of view. Plus, Tubach constantly, constantly talks about how he was hungry, but not nearly as hungry as Bernie must have been, or how it was a cold winter, but he surely wasn't as cold as Bernie must have been...by doing this he takes away the power of HIS experience. So, we have a story with SO MUCH POWER in the story itself, but the storyteller just diminishes it over and over. Too bad. It'll sell though, because of the story and the press that it's getting.

7. **I'm just about finished with Big Stone Gap** by Adrianna Trigiani. It's a good summer fluff read with not a lot of depth in plot or character but mildly entertaining. Reads like Fannie Flag or Billie Letts. They'll make a movie out of it, then sell more books—Oprah will slap her logo on it, sell even more books—but it will still be summer fluff.





Whadaya mean the newsletter is late?

By Gwen Sanford

Many of our readers would probably like to know why this issue is so &%*#@! late. It was supposed to be a June/July issue, but for lack of material to put in it, we pushed it to July/August. As you can see it's now just plain August. Where does the time go.....

The latest snafu was my own computer. It seems that we must be subjected to electric power drop-outs from our local Rural Electric, sometimes on a daily basis. Somehow, my operating system (the wonderful WIN98) was corrupted, which of course shut down a few systems. No modem, giant icons, no sound and a choice of two or sixteen colors to name just a few. My scanner has quit completely.

Fortunately I'm back in business again with no lost data that I know of. But it took awhile, and no small amount of study to figure out what to do. I'm smarter now though. The scanner — another story.

Anyway, I'm sorry for the delay of this issue of the newsletter and any inconveniences it has caused.

The Board of Trustees has discussed the newsletter any number of times over the years, and that probably won't change. Items such as content, advertising, mailing list, paid and unpaid subscriptions, frequency of publication, cost of publication and mailing, submission of material, and the number of hours it takes to edit, publish, fold-stuff-address and mail several hundred of them. Needless to say, it is quite a project done with too few volunteers at a serious financial obligation to Friends North.

Is the cost worth it? The Board thinks it is. For some of us the newsletter is our only contact with the outside world, which may seem odd, but think back to before you were out of the closet.

We have a problem though, as I see it. Friends North of Michigan is a large organization with just a teeny-tiny few who help to do the work. Sometimes, we just feel like throwing up our hands and saying *@#%^&@*, or whatever. If no one else is interested, why should we care! I know this is a common problem with any volunteer organization, but we as lgbt individuals are better than the others. I view each of us as caring, loving and responsible spirits that the rest of the world would do well to follow.

So, how about it? We know you're busy — we are too. But, with a little more sharing of the work it wouldn't take as long, and we would have a lot more fun along the way.

We will be discussing the newsletter in depth at the September Board Meeting, and welcome any input. Give us a call, or join us. ~

Lesbian Judges

Continued from
page 16

Judge Kathy Satchwell from the Johannesburg High Court.

Satchwell seeks to have sections of the Judges Remuneration and Conditions of Employment Act declared unconstitutional, as she says it prevents her female partner from sharing in benefits available to spouses of other judges.

Satchwell's application is being opposed by the state while no resistance is expected against De Vos' adoption petition.

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RESOURCES

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Department of Justice.....800-347-4283
 Gay/Lesbian National Youth
 800-347-TEEN (8336)
 Michigan Wellness Networks.....
 800-872-AIDS (2437)
 Triangle Hate Crime Reporting.....
 877-7-TRIANGLE (877-787-42640)

Statewide Services

ACLU Of Michigan.....
 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 209,
 Detroit, MI 48220
 Office.....248-398-7105
 Help Line.....800-398-4297
 E-mail.....michaclu@aol.com
 WWW.....http://michigan.aclu.org/

Lansing Association of Human Rights.....
 PO Box 18062, Lansing, MI 48826
 Phone.....517-332-3200
 http://www.macatawa.org/~lahr

Triangle Foundation.....
 19641 W. Seven Mile Rd., Detroit, MI
 313-357-3323.....Fax.....313-537-3379
 WWW.....http://www.tri.org

GLSEN
 WWW.....www.GLSEN-Michigan.org

National Services

GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education
 Network), 121 West 127th St., Suite 804,
 New York, NY 10001.....212-727-0135
 WWW.....http://www.GLSEN.org/

Gender PAC.New York, NY
 WWW.....http://www.gpac.org/

HRC (Human Rights Campaign), 919 18th
 Street NW, Washington DC 20006
 Ph..202-628-4160 FAX..202-347-5323
 E-mail.....hrc@hrc.org
 WWW.....http://www.hrc.org/

IFGE (International Foundation for Gender
 Education), PO Box 540229, Waltham, MA
 02454-0229
 Ph..781-899-2212 FAX..781-899-5703
 E-mail.....info@ifge.org
 WWW.....http://www.ifge.org

LAMBDA Legal Defense & Education
 Fund, 120 Wall St., Suite 1500, New York,
 NY 10005.....212-809-8585
 Fax.....212-809-0055
 WWW.....
 http://www.thebody.com/lambda.html

NGLTF (National Gay & Lesbian Task
 Force), 2320 Seventeenth St. NW,
 Washington DC 20009-2702
 Ph..202-332-6483 FAX..202-332-0207
 WWW.....http://www.ngtlf.org/

PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of
 Lesbians and Gays), 1101 14th St. NW,
 Suite 1030, Washington DC 2005
 Ph..202-638-420 Email..info@pflag.org
 WWW.....http://www.pflag.org/

Lesbian and Gay Aging Issues Network
 WWW.....http://www.asaging.
 org/lgain.html

Local Spiritual

Circle of the Sacred Earth,
 Rev. Nancy Hayward.....231-223-7999

Journey in Light Ministries,
 Rev. Linda L. Wilson.....231-271-2529

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Grand
 Traverse, Rev. Emmy Lou Belcher, 6726
 Center Rd., Traverse City, MI 49686
 Home..231-938-9079 Office..231-947-3117

Unity Church, Rev. Judy Grimes,
 3600 Five Mile Rd., Traverse City,
 MI 49686.....231-938-9587

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of
 Petoskey, PO Box 873, Petoskey,
 MI 49770.....231-347-8916

Local Counseling

CDRS (free substance abuse referral)
 Phone.....231-929-1315
 Toll-Free.....800-686-0749

THIRD LEVEL Crisis Intervention Center,
 1022 E. Front St., Traverse City, MI
 49686 231-922-4800
 Toll-Free.....800-442-7315
 WWW.....http://www.travese.net/
 members/thirdlevel/

WOMAN'S RESOURCE CENTER
 Phone.....231-941-1210

Susan Odgers, PhD.....946-0331

Barbara Jones Smith, PhD.....947-1444

Bay Area Counseling, LLC.....933-4009

Susan R.Breuer, PhD, Benzonia....882-4455

Sarah's Circle/Carl Anderson .995-9431

Local HIV/AIDS Health Counseling & Information

HIV Testing Anonymous & Confidential

Community Health Clinic (same day)
 Phone.....231-929-4448

Grand Traverse County Health Dept.
 Phone.....231-922-4831

Planned Parenthood Northern Michigan
 Phone.....800-230-PLAN (7526)

Thomas Judd Care Center
 Phone.....231-935-8140

Emmet County Health Dept.
 Phone.....231-347-6014

Wellness Networks.....231-933-0279
 Toll-Free.....800-947-1160
 WWW....http://www.WellnessNetworks.org

Local Service/Social/Political

Common Voices: The Friends North Rap
 Group, Call Tom.....231-275-6127

Friends North of Michigan, PO Box 562,
 Traverse City, MI 49685-0562
 Northern Michigan Help Line
 Phone231-946-1804
 E-mail.....info@friendsnorth.org
 WWW.....http://www.friendsnorth.org

GLSEN, PO Box 9, Traverse City, MI
 49685-0685.....231-943-5050
 WWW.....www.TraverseArea.com/GLSEN
 E-mail.....GLSEN@TraverseArea.com

Gay Alcoholics Anonymous, Grace
 Episcopal Church, Traverse City Call
 John.....231-922-0746 or
 Hilda.....231-938-9294

WINDFIRE Gay & Lesbian Youth Support
 Group...Call Third Level for location &
 time.....231-922-4800
 Toll-Free.....800-442-7315

Human Rights Commission.....922-4447

**Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual,
 Transgendered?
 Have Questions, Need Help?
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 Help Line
 231-946-1804**