

NETWORKING 45° NORTH

VOLUME 12 • ISSUE 3 • JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1998

AIDS Walk michigan *Traverse City*

I was just sitting here addressing postcards to all of my close personal friends, inviting them to walk with me. Most people I know would never say no to a walk with me. I'm a

lot of fun, a sparkling conversationalist and not so concerned about my aerobic rate that I can't stop and enjoy the flowers. I hope my friends will decide that walking a few miles with me Sunday afternoon September 27th will sound as great as I expect it to be. By now most of you know that September 27th marks the first AIDS Walk ever held in Traverse City. Walker sponsor forms are available at various local businesses, including Ray's Coffeehouse and Trinkets Bead Shop, as well as by phoning 616-933-0279. The walk will be just about three miles long through scenic downtown Traverse City, and I expect the fall colors and the crispness of the air to be more than invigorating. Even if it rains I plan on hiking through my hometown... rain or shine, as the pledge envelope says! Like most people in our community, I drive just about everywhere, and the WALK is a great excuse to stroll around town and try to do some good for my community and my friends.

Raising awareness about the continuing saga/drama that is AIDS is so important in every community and ours is no exception. People are still living with it here and worldwide there are 8,500 new infections everyday. Inviting my friends to walk with me is one way of reminding them that even though they aren't "personally affected" by the disease, someone in their community is... maybe even someone they know, maybe even a friend, or a friend of a friend. My generation grew up in a time where AIDS didn't exist... for a while. When it came sweeping across the nation only the truly lucky were spared, including me. Risky behaviors included receiving a blood transfusion, or going to the dentist. We know so much more now, then why are two teenagers per hour getting infected in the U.S. alone?

So get out and Walk the Walk! Get your friends out there too. Thanks to a lot of effort from Wellness Networks and the Michigan AIDS Fund, and volunteers (Thanks to every single one!) AIDS Walk 98 will be a great success, but we need you and some of your close personal friends. Come on down to the Wellness office and pick up some postcards, or pick up the phone and call someone you know who might enjoy a lovely little hike through the streets of Traverse. Registration is at 1:00 pm and Step Off is 2:00 pm at the Traverse City Senior Center. Please don't hesitate to call if you have any questions at all. The phone numbers are 888-791-WALK or 933-0279. So, do you want to go for a walk?

Rosie Vreeland-Flickinger

1998 Bike Tour Another Success

Plans made for July, 1999

Over 100 men and women gathered in late July at Sleeping Bear Dunes for the 7th annual Friends North Bike Tour. The weekend was perfect - sunny skies, Lake Michigan warm and clear, good friends, And, of course, there were the two days of biking!

Organizers had some obstacles this year, as the Park Service instigated user fees for campgrounds and vehicles. The additional costs took a bite out of the planned fundraising, and will mean an increase in cost for 1999's event. Despite the hefty increase in fees, none of the planners felt that the tour should be moved from the Sleeping Bear National Park.

The campground handled the 100 people nicely, with plenty of space for volleyball and nightly bonfires. Glen Haven's beautiful cove of beaches offered the best swimming and clearest water of the year.

Riders left Sleeping Bear Group Campground on Saturday morning for the day of riding. There were options of 30, 60 and 90 mile

tours for the day. When the riders finished, there was swimming and shopping in Glen Arbor.

Instead of the catered dinner in downtown Glen Arbor in years past, the tour gathered in Maple City at the Schoolhouse Cafe. Their staff was welcoming and the food was great. There was a cash bar and even some dancing after dinner. Everyone agreed that this was a wonderful place to have the Saturday Night Party.

Sunday's ride was much shorter, with a quick trip around Glen Lake and then the option of riding the Scenic Drive in the park. Afterwards, about 50 people took the afternoon to swim and play volleyball at Otter Creek.

There have been many requests from local cyclists who would like to participate in the event but who do not want to camp out. Tour organizers say that they are evaluating some new ideas for 1999, including a Saturday-only tour followed by dinner. They have even talked about arranging a shorter tour for beginning riders. They are attempting to schedule the event on one of two weekends- either July 16-18 or July 23-25.



from the editor

It would seem remiss not to start off with an apology to you - our members and our readers (yes, there appears to be a difference). This issue was stalled for a few months as we re-grouped and reevaluated its purpose in the light of some financial difficulties. I must admit, that the perfect summer also seemed to have played its role.

We are hoping that with the addition of Sheryl Layton as advertising coordinator, that funds will be available to continue publishing this newsletter on a regular basis. The newsletter budget receives half of its money from advertisers and the rest comes from membership dues and summer Bike Tour proceeds. And, as you may have noticed, those whose dues have not been renewed are now receiving reminders in the mail. We hope that you will continue to contribute and to maintain the community of Friends North to serve northwest lower Michigan.

A complaint we hear all too often is that Friends North needs to be more 1) social, 2) political, 3) service oriented. But, the events and direction of Friends North, although monitored by the Board, is directly up to the members and volunteers. If you are interested in any particular activity, please call a board member and discuss how it might occur. But, remember that you will be asked to coordinate your idea into making it a reality. Our Board welcomes your ideas and especially, your involvement.

As always, there is a lot of conversation about what the purpose of the newsletter should be. It has evolved to what it is today because of Richard Curtis, the publisher, and me, its editor. Since some might ask how we select our articles, it might be helpful to state them for the record.

We attempt to obtain local contributions written by those who want to write local stories, essays, letters or features. Then, we fill in with other things to attempt to bring a snapshot of what is going on in the gay community in the State, around the country and in the world today. I strive for those stories and opinions that might be harder to find in today's newspapers and magazines. But, there has been a lot of mainstream coverage of gay and lesbian issues in the last few years especially on the internet.

If you have any comments or would like to contribute to the newsletter, please call me. I welcome your input.

Richard Tuxbury

Friends North, Inc., P.O. Box 562, Traverse City, MI 49685-0562
(616) 946-1804 (This is a general information line answered by Third Level.)

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.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING and notices are run without charge. Please submit in writing or by calling the editor (and leave ad on machine 2713042 or by email.)

DISPLAY ADVERTISING in Networking 45° North is available in Business Card size - \$25.00 per space per issue or an annual rate of \$100.00 for 5 issues. Inserts and larger sized ads are available. Please call Sheryl Layton - 616-938-9294/Galbuffalo@aol.com

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

DEADLINES: #4 October 15

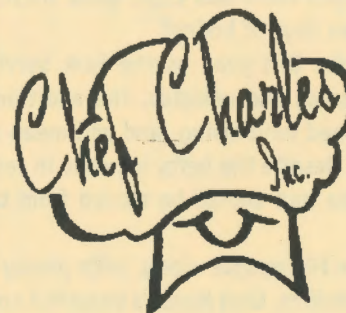
ADDRESS CHANGES: Please notify us in advance if a change is coming. Call John Evans, 922-0746, or e-mail changes to jdevans@gtii.com.

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

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From the president

As I write this article, I'm sitting on the dunes reflecting on this spring. And as some of you already know, it has been a bitter, sweet spring for me.

April 29th my 21-year-old brother Dale, committed suicide. This has been impacting my life in ways I never dreamed of. I have learned that I am not the pillar of strength I once thought, and if it weren't for the out pouring of support from friends from the gay community, all the cards, flowers, food, trees, letters, hugs and most of all love you all have shown towards my family... it makes me proud to be a part of the gay community. And when my father ended up in the ICU for three weeks near death the out pouring of support came again, without hesitation. This has been my spring. The sweet side is it has been a beautiful spring and dad is home and doing well.

I would like to thank the board for picking up the slack for me, and allowing me to focus on my family the past few months. And to you, the members of Friends North, some of you are waiting to hear back from me and I hope to get back into the swing of things soon. Thank you for your patience.

The Pride Day Picnic at the Robb farm was a huge success again, and was well attended, over 100 people came out to enjoy the day. Thanks goes to the Pride Day Committee, and the Robbs for a great day.

And don't forget the Bike Tour. It's a ton of fun, and you don't have to ride if you don't want to. Come join us for dinner and or camping next year.

Take care, Kirk.

Common Voices: The Friends North Rap Group

Tom Barkley

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.



222 E. Front Street
Traverse City, MI 49684
Downtown

PH: 616-946-8528
Fax: 616-946-3553

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 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 Tom at the number 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 Tom (275-6127).

Since the last "Networking" we have eaten at Boone's and at Panda North. Our monthly meetings have included a presentation and video on safe sex. (thanks Tom.) Loraine Anderson visited us, discussing her coming-out process among other things. (Thanks Phil for arranging this.) And this month Greg Baird talked about community, how we can influence the community-at-large, and self-esteem. His talk expanded on his article in the last "Networking."

Autumn Hike & Pot Luck

September 26th 2:00 pm

**Join us on the Old Mission Peninsula
at the Pyatt Lake Nature Preserve**

(Follow Peninsula Drive past Bowers Harbor, turn right on Bowers Harbor Rd., then right on the park.)

**We will have the cider press to
make apple cider, lots of games and
fun. We will call in barred owls at
dusk. Bon Fire on the beach after.**

Call Kirk at 933-5250

or

Tim at 941-8987

Announcements:

THE AUTUMN HIKE AND POTLUCK PICNIC will be held on Saturday, September 26 at 2:00 pm on the Old Mission Peninsula (Pyatt Lake Nature Preserve).. call 933-5250 or 941-8987 or check out the Friends North web site.

HARVEST POTLUCK: November 22 at 4:30 pm at Grace Episcopal Church. Friends North will provide turkey, potatoes, gravy. Bring a dish to pass. Come and meet the board and the board candidates. Everyone is welcome.

Friends North is looking for candidates for the 1999 Board positions which will be open in December. To be considered as a candidate, please contact any board member.

Friends North Summer Events

Pride Picnic 98 Theme:

"Building Community Through Understanding"

June 22 was a perfect day for the Pride event. Nearly 100 attended the event hosted at the Robb farm. Participants enjoyed volleyball, potluck, grilled burgers and dogs, open mic, comedy short, art project, good music, and most importantly... wonderful fellowship.

During the meal we had speakers who represented Wellness, PFLAG, Hate Free TC, Common voices, Petoskey Group, Wind Fire youth group, and others. We were entertained by two young people from windfire who shared their music with us. Many helped create the art project "Building Community- Bridging our Differences"... build blocks to community. Links which included Love, tolerance, family, friends, PFLAG, Gay AA, Be Real, Come Out, Get Involved, and many others... kids from 7-65 painted on brightly colored boxes and created a bridge out of them. Everyone stayed sat and talked, made new friends and new connections.

I'd like to thank the committee that worked so hard to bring this about: Alan Williams, Ed Richardson, Tim Schmidt, Sheryl Layton, Joan Williams, and Ron Simms. Special thanks to Kirk, Charles, and Wendy. Thanks to all who attended and made the event what it was intended to be...a pride event.

Like any event, so much time and energy goes into the planning that at times you wonder the worth of it all. The following connection made it all come together for me. I was introduced to a nervous father. He stood at the edge of the function watching... he volunteered "That's my daughter playing the guitar and singing. She is so talented, you should hear her on the cello. We've really struggled with this "coming out" of hers. I really worried about letting her come to this function. I'm so glad I stopped by to check it out myself. There are lots of fun clean activities going on... smiling people... a good thing."

Adopt-A-Highway

(on the one mile of M-72 highway dedicated to Friends North)

We've had two pick-up days already this year. I would encourage you, if you have never participated, to join us on September 30 at 5:30 pm at the old Acme Theater. Bring water and gloves. If we have 8 people it only takes two hours.

Its a hoot to compare our loot at the end. We have several categories... grossest, funniest, and most unusual. On July 22, our coordinator Alec Alspaugh, won hands down... He found a black push-up bra (refused to model)! And also, he came up with a wallet containing \$247.00!!!! Some lucky young woman from Rapid City was very happy to get this back. Way to go Alec!

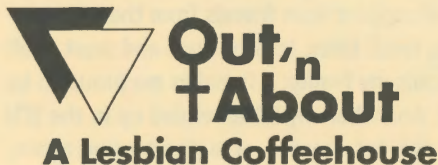
Best of all you get to share time with fellow F.N. people.
Come join us.

-Brenda Bartz

FRIENDS NORTH WEB SITE

Alan N. Williams

The Friends North Web site (<http://friends-north.base.org> or <http://members.tripod.com/FriendsNorth>) is now open for public viewing. Currently the site has pages for an event calendar, event news, resources, and groups in northern Michigan. If you have feedback about the site, please e-mail friends.north@usa.net or use the "Feedback" page at the site.



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

Upcoming Events

September 19, '98 **MOVIE NIGHT - COSTA BRAVA** - The word is, "it is a must see movie". The relationship between Anna, who is "Catalan, a lesbian and works in Barcelona as a tour guide to pay bills while she fund-raises to open her comedic monologue and Montserrat, who is Jewish, a seismic engineer and not quite sure of her sexual orientation. An intriguing romantic comedy about two strong women making life together. ALSO—WOMEN FROM DOWN UNDER - See PEACH, starring Lucy Lawless (XENA, WARRIOR PRINCESS), a sexy tow truck driver attracted to a young Maori woman, in one of four short films. The Land Down Under has produced many extraordinary filmmakers, from Jane Campion (The Piano) to Gillian Armstrong (Little Women). Now comes the latest generation of short films.

October 17, 1998 - Another Movie - "All Over Me", a fresh story of young girls in love from the producers of The Incredibly True Adventure of 2 Girls in Love. Includes a great soundtrack featuring Arni DiFranco, The Murmurs, Patti Smith and more

November 21, 1998 - Thanksgiving/Harvest Gathering and maybe more, we may also have some clips of the ever popular "Top Twins" and other short clips.

December - No Coffeehouse - Happy Hanukkah/Merry Christmas

We are also thinking about planning a trip to Detroit to see a WNBA game in the next year, so stay tuned.

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.

columns

UP this way

by Greg R. Baird

What a wonderful beginning of summer it has been. I hope all of you are getting some sunshine, warmth and those nice breezes across our lakes. A lot has been changing around the Petoskey/Cheboygan area that all of you should know about.

It is often very difficult to have a place where you can connect with other gay folks, to share, laugh and have a good time outside of that bar atmosphere. If you didn't know already, a group of gay/lesbian and bisexual people are meeting once a week in Petoskey at a local restaurant. We just moved our dinner group to Wednesday nights at 7:00pm in Noggin Room at the bottom of the Perry Hotel in downtown Petoskey. This is a good opportunity to meet new people and have that feeling of community, which is so important for all of us. Thanks also to the work of a few, we now have a newsletter to keep people posted on activities, announcements, classifieds and gay friendly businesses. Its people like this that do the newsletter that bring something into our community and is so desperately needed. Thanks!!

If you were to travel 45 minutes Northeast you would find a new place for gay people to go and find support. Its that community feeling I'm talking about! Thanks to Stan and Chris, they have created "The Underground." The Underground is a place to have fun and socialize without all the attitude the bar sometimes brings. With lots of hard work and dedication Stan and Chris have converted the basement of their downtown retail store (Talk of the Town) into a beautifully decorated environment complete with music, dance floor, big screen T.V., big over stuffed furniture and warm welcoming friendship.

The Underground is not a licensed bar. If you want to drink alcohol, you are welcome to bring your own. Soft drinks and mixes can be purchased for a small fee. Any small profit from this will be to help buy ice and snacks. Donations are accepted to help cover the operational costs.

The plans are to be open every two weeks on a Saturday from 8:30pm till 1:00am. For more information you may contact Stan at (616) 627-9883 or www.bridge627@aol.com. Again, its people like this that give back to the community to make things better, to offer of themselves unselfishly. I'm very thankful that we have people like this in our community.

A few newsletters back I asked people where they go to find that since of community or if they would like to get connected. I'm still interested in finding out and helping those out who need to "get connected." Feel free to write me at P.O. Box 132, Petoskey, MI 49770 or e-mail at gbair@sunny.ncmc.cc.mi.us. I would really like to hear from you and see what is happening where you are at - the outcome can only be positive.

Enjoy your fall and take a drive to Petoskey or Cheboygan to see what's happening up this way. Peace.

Profile: Sheryl Layton

John Evans

Sheryl Layton's story is about a Michigan girl who went to Texas to seek her fortune and returned with a new outlook on life, a girlfriend and a burgeoning career.

"It was eleven below zero when I left Michigan in my little Chevette, loaded with cases of wine, and when I got there it was 40 degrees and people were shivering in downtown San Antonio, and it was culture shock because it was largely Hispanic - 65%... so I was in minority.

Went into a Spanish speaking kitchen..."

Sheryl had just graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, and had accepted a job with the Four Seasons Hotel in San Antonio.

This all started on a wheat farm north of Howell where Sheryl grew up and graduated from Howell High School.

"When I was 15, I was looking for a job. I put an application in at the car wash and at the restaurant and the restaurant called me first for a waitress job and I took it. I jumped from job to job for about ten years before I ever got into the kitchen."

Sheryl lived in Detroit for a couple of years and then moved to Marquette where she worked in the Crow's Nest of the Old Marquette Inn.

"I was working at the Crow's Nest cleaning shrimp and squid and I wondered if I was ever going to make more than \$5 an hour. And the answer to my question was NO. So I decided to go to school."

And so she did - at the Jacobetti Skill Center (comparable to our TBA Skill Center) where after one semester the instructor told her he couldn't teach her anything more and that if she was really serious about this and wanted to be a chef, she should go to New York.

"He wrote a letter for me. I had to write an essay about why I wanted to do this. I got on the waiting list - went downstate to live with my parents for a year."

The first of her two years at the Institute Sheryl lived on campus, but the next year she shared an apartment in Poughkeepsie with a group of students and worked in a winery. She was paid in bottles of wine - a bottle of wine for an hour of work! (Hence, the cases of wine she loaded into her little Chevette)

When she began working at the Four Seasons Sheryl found she was working not only with Spanish-speaking people but also with a drinking crew. Pitchers of Margaritas and beer were always in the cooler and drinking was encouraged.

"After six months I knew I needed rehab! I called the hotline not knowing at was a treatment center. They wanted to pick me up right then at 3:00 in the morning, but I had liquid courage. I knew better. I chose to stop on the way to work the next day. I went to a counseling session where they talked me - scared me - into treatment."

Fortunately Sheryl's employer was very supportive during her stay in treatment, and she returned to work after the month was up and lived in a half-way house for alcoholic women. The drinking

(Profile continued next page)

environment at work became burdensome for her, so when the six month's transition period was over, Sheryl got her own apartment and got on the midnight shift to escape that atmosphere.

"I became the midnight chef. We catered to all the celebrities and their desires for after hours feasting."

But after about two years Sheryl found it was well nigh impossible to get off this midnight shift. She answered an ad in the paper from Marriott, not knowing it was for their hospital division.

"But when they told me how much it paid and no weekends or nights I took it and began working at Santa Rosa Hospital."

Meanwhile, a very important person came into Sheryl's life during her period of rehabilitation.

"I was still living in the halfway house when I met Hilda. I wasn't very interested in her at first. I didn't like healthy people. But about the time I was coming up on one year of sobriety she started asking me out - daytime dates. She started telling me all about the things she was interested in, and they were all the same things I was interested in, 'cause she'd ask me first 'what do you like - what are your hobbies' and stuff like that. And I'd tell her I like to fish and I like....all the things I like and she would say 'I like all those things too', and I thought she was lying to me - to get into my pants. And it wasn't a lie. It was all divine appointment. I couldn't see that at the time. I thought she was putting one over on me. But over a period of time I began to see the credibility in her because she was sane. We've been together 13 years now."

Sheryl had not really totally accepted that she was a lesbian until she began to get sober.

"I was 18 when I had my first date. I identified myself as a lesbian but I still messed around with men, and I think I still thought it was something I would grow out of. I thought, and my mother did too, my family thought I was going to eventually settle down and get married. I really believed it - bought it hook, line and sinker. So by the time I was 31 and got sober and actually grew up and got responsible and began to look at my life and get honest, my sponsor said: 'Well, let's look at it this way. If you were the next-door-neighbor of Sheryl for the last five years and saw people come and go from her place - you saw who came and who left and what kind of life Sheryl was living, what would you say her sexual orientation was?' And I said 'Aw, she's lesbian!' And then my sponsor said 'If it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck and walks like a duck it probably is a duck'"

"When I drank I had a hard time with that. I had to get honest when I got sober and as a consequence I take that honesty wherever I go. I take it into my work just who I am wherever I am - with my family, with Hilda's family, with casual acquaintances, with people on the phone. Everybody. I don't want anybody to think I'm straight. So I let them know. It is how it is supposed to be - how I was designed. I accept it now. It took a long time to get it, but now that I've got it, I've got it. I don't waffle and it feels good.

"Since I've had a lot of jobs, I've had a lot of practice coming out. Every time I go to a new one I let everybody know who work with me, my peers, my superiors. I take Hilda's picture and put it on



Sheryl Layton (seen here in a snowscape, that's a bright red coat!)

my desk. When I see people struggle with this, I feel that I am doing them a favor - if they don't accept it from me this time, it helps them stretch their horizons so that the next time it might be a little easier for them. Anyway it is their deal not mine."

When Sheryl met Hilda, Hilda was living in a garage apartment owned by a man named LeRoy, a widower, who lived in the house. And as things go with lesbians, after they were about 24

hours into their relationship they started talking about living arrangements. In talking to LeRoy, he came up with the suggestion to make a switch so that the women could live in the house and he, in the apartment. That went on for about seven years. When they got ready to move to Traverse City they invited LeRoy and he accepted without a pause and is still with them as a father.

It was Sheryl's job that brought the family of three (plus canine and feline members) to Traverse City in 1992. Sheryl was installed as Executive Chef at Munson Medical Center. Hilda, having gone through computer schooling, got a job at the Casino in Suttons Bay keeping the slot machines in working order. But soon Hilda got her dream job, which she still holds with IBM and the family had to move to Saginaw. Marriott transferred Sheryl to the Saginaw General Hospital.

"After we got settled in we realized how much we missed this area. We would visit every weekend or so and stay with people or maybe camp. But we wanted someplace where we could go and have a place to stay, so we started looking, and I like Benzie County. And we found a little piece of property 15 acres and bought it and put a garage on it and called it a camp. No electricity or water. We mushroom hunt, bird watch, deer hunt, bow hunt, etc."

Then came another move. IBM had a job for Hilda in Traverse City, but Marriott had none for Sheryl. They moved anyway and have settled out at the east end of town with LeRoy and the dachshunds and cat. Fortunately for Sheryl, IBM has domestic partner benefits, so it was not necessary for her to find full time remunerative employment. But the need to be creatively occupied in her profession gnawed away at Sheryl until an idea for a business presented itself.

Sheryl had always had in mind that she might one day open a restaurant, but given a family and a partner who has nights and weekends off, the 24-hour-a-day seven-day-a-week regimen of the restaurant business was out of the question.

"I started wondering what I could do that would use my expertise and still allow me nights and weekends off - I've never had that in my 30-year career. It was Hilda's idea to start this truffle business. I had been making truffles - I'd perfected the recipe over the

(Profile continued next page)

years with Marriott because I would make them for huge receptions, teas, Christmas parties, weddings. It was something I enjoyed doing. I'm good at it. So why not try to put all these things together: Traverse City and cherry and chocolate. Traverse City Cherry Chocolate Truffles."

The recipe is very simple: chocolate, cherry and cream. A perfect one woman business. Sheryl has been at it for a little over two months now and has 30 customers all over Northern Michigan from Ludington to Mackinac Island.

"I finally have a job I love doing - I think about it when I'm not at work. I make truffles two days a week and market and distribute them the other three days. Marketing and distributing are new for me - a stretch - and very good for me. But the chocolates speak for themselves. I do not have to do hard sell."

The chocolate delights can be found in several places downtown: The Horizon Book Store, American Spoon Foods, Forgarelli's, The Cherry Stop, Wine Country and Burritts Market.

Also at Oryana, and at the Mall: Chateau Chantal and the Hallmark Store.

It should not go without mention that Sheryl is a member of the American Culinary Federation, Northwest Michigan Chapter. She was selected as chef of the year in 1992 just before leaving Munson to move to Saginaw. In 1996 she was certified as an Executive Chef - one of only 95 women in the country. As a volunteer she is involved in the American Cancer Society and is a member of the Friends North Board.

Bending Trees

Linda Wilson

The day before I had to drive over to Roscommon - there was a strong downdraft... which is a strong wind that comes directly down and catches everyone by surprise and has speeds normally above 75 mph. There were trees broken and a general mess along the highway. *You knew* something had happened. Yet even with the high winds, there were some trees in the area still standing.

Again about three weeks ago, client was just leaving my office - we stepped out the door and looked to the right. High winds were blowing, It looked as if a storm was blowing in over the top of the hill -The trees were bending way over. It was impressive. However,

they did not break. Bob and I were astounded at how far over the trees were bending without breaking even though they were being blown furiously. They were highly flexible!

Life is sometimes very much like a storm. We are the trees. Think of some of the things that come into our lives: illness, identity crises, divorce, relationship upsets, death, family problems, loss, disasters, personal failures to be who we want to be.

On the positive side of: new location and/or job to adjust to unexpected news that brings change new marriage - new adjustments personal success You may think that the positive side of the winds of life are not something to be reckoned with. But just like the negative side, there is a need for adjustment and flexibility. Did you know that there are some things that have stayed bent for so long that when you finally try to straighten them out, they break? Somehow they did not have the flexibility to bend and flex with the pressure, and they stayed bent and then when they were straightened out again they broke. A good example of this is when furniture is made with cane or bamboo. After the material has dried and stayed in that position for years, it is no longer flexible.

We all face storms. We all have to confront ourselves, our fears and our doubts. We all have to face our weaknesses. For this we have a very strong God. A God who is able to give more strength and to be that invisible hand that holds on tight while we wade through the raging waters to dry land, or to hold the tree to keep it from breaking.

These two things can bring us encouragement if we will remember them at the moment when the downdraft is the strongest: We have a very big, strong, loving God who cares about us. We have each other to love and to help hold on with us.

Just like the tree in Psalm 1, we too can be planted beside the water and receive nourishment which supplies strength. And after we weather the storms and continue to nourish ourselves, we see that it says we will produce fruit. There is a verse in I Corinthians 10:13 that talks about temptation, and presents a concept that is really a basic principle we can apply to all areas of life. The verse says: No temptation has come your way that is too hard for flesh and blood to bear. But God can be trusted not to allow you to suffer any temptation beyond your powers of endurance. God will see to it that every temptation has a way out, so that it will never be impossible for you to bear it. (Phillips)

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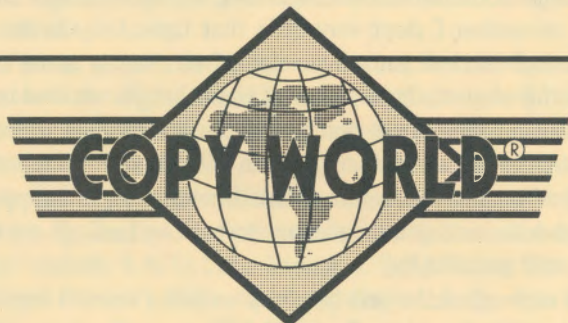
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A NEW Beginning's End

Michael Allen Kreps

Well, it is a little after 6 00 p. m Saturday night, and I've just got off the phone with you. I ha decided to write a letter that may never be sent, because I have so much within me that is unexpressed.

I have spent a great deal of time since April I reflecting on you and me, and searching within myself for faults and weaknesses that bring me from time to time to emotional ruin. They are not hard to find. I know you tried to reassure me that it wasn't my fault, but I cannot help but think that somehow, I let a rare and beautiful thing slip through my hands. You would have felt differently about me, and you would have wanted to continue a romantic relationship with me, if I could have been more of what you wanted. I can't begin to tell you how much I wish I was that man, because you are everything I could have hoped to have in a man, and my heart still yearns for you beyond relief 66 days later.

Not one day since then have I not thought about you and what for me has felt like a great loss. Most vividly, I frequently recall us slow-dancing together at the Triangle not long after we met in January, and how my heart soared when you reached over to me that night in the car and held my hand. My mind constantly returns to the moments when we lay together at night. Your clean scent still haunts me.

I also remember the events of that first Wednesday of April, when you chose your words carefully in that restaurant, in complete dominion over your emotions. I felt so rejected, yet my feelings for you were undiminished. In an effort to keep the tension broken, you chattered of insubstantial things right from the restaurant all the way back to your apartment, while I suffered silently. I felt like asking you to just be quiet for a little while.

I was genuinely surprised by my reaction; I thought I would handle it better than I did. I'm the one after all who set us together that night to bring this up, and it's not as if I didn't know what was coming. What was said to me in words that night I had already seen in your eyes the last time we were together. It was subtle, like a gentle change in the breeze on the ocean, but to me it was unmistakable. I remember I slept very little that time. I lay beside you that night and watched you as you slept; I was keenly aware that I had blown the whole thing somehow. I know that you wanted to end it earlier, but refrained from doing so because I had just welcomed you back from your week- long absence with the gift of glassware that you had so admired before in Southfield I was so happy with what I had done, and you didn't want to hurt my feelings—a kindness I am still grateful for.

When we hugged the last time in your living room, I know you regretted hurting me, while I regretted things said and unsaid between us, my heart aching with inconsolable grief. It is the sweetest agony I have ever known. I was in tears again as soon as your door

(A New Beginning — continued on next page)

Are you experiencing a storm in your life in some way?
Do you need to spend more time with close friends for encouragement?

Do you need to spend more time alone to clarify your thinking?
Have you spent time meditating and drawing strength from God?
Are you being very good to yourself? And gentle with yourself?

The next time we have a whopper of a storm, watch the trees, think about their flexibility and strength. Imagine yourself taking nourishment from the earth and bearing the deliciously good fruit that is the natural outcome of a good strong tree in your life. Give thanks that you are flexible, that you have resources of strength in God and you have the love of your brothers and sisters. Give thanks that you will be lifted - sooner or later - from your distresses. Be thankful that you do not have to walk with the ungodly and scornful and have their angry responses to life. You do not need to lash out and be filled with inner turmoil. Give thanks that you do not need to live under the control of fear and depression. All of these responses we may experience, but they do not have to dominate our live. We can be strong, flexible, fruitful trees in the storms of life.

Journey In Light Ministries meets 1st & 3rd Sunday of the month, Suttons Bay Library Community Room (side entrance) Call (616) 271-2529 for more information.

It's Time to Get Political

A message from Ian J. Whitney

As we enter the 1998 political campaign season, please keep the following in mind:

- You can actively advocate change in our community
- The average local campaign contribution (\$25) is less than the cost of a new hardcover book, the admission price to three movies, and dinner for two at most restaurants
- Helping with a literature drop is good exercise
- Your **vote does count**

The rewards to voting and volunteering:

- You earn the right to complain (about the government)! Those who do not vote lose that right
- You have actively contributed to creating a government that represents you
- You have done your part in furthering the fight for equality

Where do you start?

- Send \$25 (or whatever you can spare) to the candidate of your choice
- Volunteer to make phone calls, to put a sign in your yard, or to pass out literature
- Tell your friends to support that candidate

There is too much political apathy in our community. There is no excuse to not vote. There are very few excuses for not volunteering. Let's join hands as a community and work together to create a better future. It's time to flex the political power that we all have as United States Citizens.

closed behind me, and I cried so hard during the trip back north that sometimes I couldn't see the road. They have made a holiday for me with this day in mind, and they call it April Fools' Day.

All this having been said, I don't for a minute regret our time together, and I am so very grateful for you and 1, even though it was to be for just a little while. I have known rejection my whole life, ever since my awn mother abandoned me when I was two, never to be seen again, and even when Paul left me for the big life in Nashville after *eleven* years together. Life bewilders me so. I have sent nothing but love out to those around me and so often it is not returned. Soon you will meet someone new, someone so wonderful you will lay down at night with him in your thoughts, and you'll often dream of him throughout the day. I just want you to know that you are so very special, more than you'll ever know, and the man who gets you will have found a priceless treasure.

I continue to hope that the road your heart is on will someday lead back to me, but you have told me "that stage of our relationship is over." During our time together, we never really defined our emotional investment with each other. I never told you how I really felt because I was afraid the spell would be broken, and I did not want you to recoil from me. Of course [know it doesn't matter anymore, so I will tell you now:

Ever since you reached over to me that night in the car, my hand to hold, your ascendancy over me in my heart was complete. I have loved you ever since.

Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end.

Houghton Lake, 6 June, 1998

I will always love you,

Michael Allen Kreps

High Tea Thank You

The 5th Annual High Tea was held April 12th, Easter Sunday at the Opera House in Traverse City. Over 100 people turned out to enjoy great food, wonderful entertainment by Kevin, Colin and Jim as well as the Northern Michigan Womyn's Choir; lots of fabulous door prizes, shopping opportunities, fun and conversation. The High Tea is a celebration of our community and friends. It is a time to come together, take pride in our community and celebrate the richness of our diversity.

Please support the following businesses and individuals who sponsored the High Tea and/or provided the wonderful door prizes: A.L. Mitchell & Associates; Barker Creek Nursery; Bellaire Bed & Breakfast; Bellaire Cafe; Bookie Joint; Borders Books; Candle Factory; Chef Charles'; Cindy and Dean Robb; Fantasia's Gardens; Hair Force One; Horizon Books Instant Framer; Jen-Tees Custom Screen Printing; Laura Lawicki, C.M.T.; Lissa Napora, C.M.T.; Miner's North; Norther Michigan Womyn's Choir; Old Town Playhouse; Suzette Corbit D.C. Chiropractor; Traverse City Cherry Chocolate Truffles; and Wendy VanValkenburg, C.M.T.

About the City Commission

Jim Poole

The Traverse City City Commission held a study group with the Traverse City Human Rights Commission to discuss amending the city press. pol to include sexual orientation on June 8. This was the third time the city commission has discussed the issue after rejecting it in two separate votes two years ago. Of the seven commissioners, three expressed support for the amendment, then rejected it and one, Commissioner Tompkins did not clearly state how he would side in a formal vote.

The three supportive commissioners were newly elected officials M. Dodd, L. Smyka, and T. Gilbert. (Some referred to having expressed support before the election when the press covered the issue).

J. Weese and P Orth rejected it as they did two years ago. Weese stated that he felt this policy would put gays above everyone else. L Hardy said that he has changed his mind from when he supported the policy two years ago because he was convinced that the policy would expose the city to a number of lawsuits. Commissioner Tompkins expressed the same concern he had two years ago that changing the policy would send a message that there is discrimination going on within the city. He did, however state that he feels the city should be looking at a broader city ordinance. He said that if the HRC is looking for enough votes to pass a policy that an ordinance should be discussed.

Rudy Serra, a downstate lawyer, and former member of Michigan Human Rights Commission, addressed the comments that the committee raised. He said that the statute would not put gays above others because as defined by law sexual orientation is a term that describes everyone and therefore no individual is placed above another. He said the heterosexual and bisexual would have the same protection under this provision. He said that the city would be protected from law suite because in a discrimination charge the city could prove that it is against their law to discriminate and therefore show that the manager or employer acted alone.

Serra said that the city should not be concerned with sending a negative message. Serra said he felt the city would be sending a positive measure by making a choice not to allow discrimination in an area that is often thought to be conservative.

K. Anders of the HRC later took a group of people at the Friends North Pride Picnic that the commission has given up on passing a policy change, but that they will probably approach the city at a later time with a city-wide ordinance. She said that the committee will need the support of the community at that time.

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CLASSIFIEDS

(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: Wright Thanodin, Box 176, Leland, MI 49654 (issue 3)

SEEKING BOYFRIEND: 21 y.o., 5'6", 128#. I am outgoing, romantic, sincere, easy-going and enjoy nature hikes. Please write to Sean, 1627 Woodard St., Traverse City, MI 49686 (issue 3)

HOUSING:

CULINARY CHEF LOOKING for housing in Petoskey/Charlevoix or surrounding area. Can house sit. Please call 616-201-2200. (issue 3)

21 YO WANTS ROOMMATE: Near downtown TC; \$200./mo. Write: Sean, 1627 Woodard St., Traverse City, MI 49686 (issue 3)

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE TRIANGLE FOUNDATION in Detroit has asked that we pass along their statewide, toll-free number for reporting hate crimes. Please call 1-888-442-9287. (issue 3)

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 7:30pm. For information, call Tom at 275-6127. (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 Jim or Kirk at 933-5250 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 3)

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. Wednesdays @ the Noggin Room in the Perry Hotel. 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

letters

May 2, 1998

Friends-North, Inc.
Traverse City MI 49684

Dear Friend.

We are a small group of concerned Catholics who want to reach out to anyone who has been hurt by the church or the civic community through prejudice and lack of compassion and understanding. Each time we meet, it is our intention to educate ourselves and then reach out in a way that indicates that we want to be loving persons because of the educational thrust that we have discussed.

Last month we viewed a film from "Catholics Speak Out," which contains a segment on Gay and Lesbian Persons. After a lengthy discussion, we all wanted to contact your organization and tell you that we **support you and want you to know** that, if you have been hurt by any church in the past, we ask your forgiveness and assure all of you that we are your friends.

We ask that God may smile on you and give you peace.
Sincerely in Christ,

Robert E. Marshall
 Mary M. Easthope
 Catherine Valovik
 Pamela Agee
 Hedra Kuchta
 Sharon Buell
 Alan Buell

Sister Celina Ansel
 Tom Hinshelberg (CG)
 Connie Sanna (CG)

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)

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Doing the Splits

—Alan N. Williams

Ever see the movie version of “Jeffrey”? There’s this scene where a Pride parade is getting set up, and as Steve reads the list of participating groups, and names like “Concerned Pan-Asian Bisexuals” and “Black Gay Republicans” pop up. Funny, aren’t they? Sad thing is, it’s not all satire. Many members of the GLBT community have been complaining for some time about the splintering of the community.

The people who complain have a point. If the point of referring to a “gay community” or “gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered (GLBT) community” is to create a sense of unity against the biases created by the heterosexual world at large, then maybe we are defeating the purpose of that unity by separating into a collection of special-interest organizations. Many times the GLBT-oriented news media (e.g. *The Advocate*) has reported on the splits within sections of the GLBT community. Separation within the community isn’t even a new thing, really; back in 1970, the co-founder of the Daughters of Bilitis, Del Martin, left the Gay Liberation movement in favor of the Women’s Movement. Today there are special-interest groups for a whole host of GLBT youth, transgendered, lesbians, bisexuals, and, of course, gay men. When groups like ACT UP and Queer Nation were attacked by other organizations within the GLBT community, what kind of ammunition is the community, as a whole, giving those who would deny us equal rights? For that matter, what does such splintering do to the concept of GLBT Pride?

I’m not sure if there’s an answer to the first question, but to answer the second, I extend an invitation to attend an event like Chicago’s Pride Parade or Friends North’s own Pride Picnic. (Although both will already be over for this year by the time you read this, I invite you to attend next year.) If you go to Chicago, take a notebook and write the names of the groups who march in the parade. When I’ve been to these parades, I’ve seen a gay men’s chorus, people from PFLAG, some of the different bars (Roscoe’s has had everything from floats to a dance troupe to a “rifle corps,” sometimes all in the same parade), the Chicago Gay Metal Society (that’s “metal” as in the rock genre “heavy metal”), the Lambda Car Club, LEAGUE (AT&T’s GLBT group)—plus, of course, politicians, radio stations (Chicago’s Q101 distributes promo stickers with a rainbow background), and all the stereotypes that tend to pop up on the evening news when one of the parades receives any kind of air time. Heck, there’s even a GLBT square dancing group.

Special-interest groups? You bet. All in the same parade? Sure thing. Despite the differences between the groups, and despite the odd pictures that may be created in someone’s mind, all these different groups share the concept of Pride. What GLBT Pride boils down to is an understanding that the GLBT community is, or at least is supposed to be, about being free to be oneself. It’s a reminder that it took drag queens at Stonewall, women in the Daughters of Bilitis, men in the Mattachine Society, and countless other groups of individuals to get us where we are today—to get us to the point where we can march down the streets together, and to reach the understanding that, despite the differences among the members of the community that we share, we still have something in common.

And that is what really defines a community.

Triangle Foundation Statewide Activism

1. Victims Project.

The Triangle Foundation has established 5 outstate reporting stations for tracking and reporting anti-glbtc discrimination, intimidation, harassment, and violence. Additional reporting stations will be added throughout the year. Currently stations exist in Grand Rapids, Flint, Mt. Pleasant, Lansing, and Ann Arbor. Possible future sites include: Traverse City, Kalamazoo, Saginaw, Marquette, and Escanaba.

2. Legal Advocacy Fund

The Triangle Foundation has established a Legal Aid Fund to assist clients statewide with attorney and court costs. The Legal Advocacy Fund is the only one of its kind in Michigan.

3. Human Rights Project

The Triangle Foundation offers attorney referrals for clients around Michigan. The Human Rights Project helps clients seek legal assistance from glbt and glbt friendly attorneys near every major city in the state.

4. Legislative Education

The Triangle Foundation tracks legislation and policy initiatives on the local, state and national level. At any given time, the Triangle Foundation is working to support, or oppose legislation dealing with hate crimes, workplace discrimination, adoption/custody, same-sex marriage, domestic partnership benefits, HIV funding/prevention, and legislation dealing with minority and women’s rights.

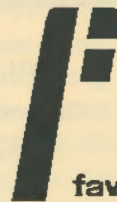
5. Legislative District Coordinators (LDC’s)

The Triangle Foundation has established a statewide network of LDC’s to work locally on issues of state and local importance. LDC’s meet with their elected officials, assist in tracking and reporting anti-glbtc activity, and track defamation in local press.

6. People of Faith Network

The Triangle Foundation works with religious leaders and churches around the state of Michigan to combat the right-wing fundamentalist rhetoric and political action designed to strip glbt

(Triangle Foundation continued on next page)



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people of their dignity, safety, and civil rights. The People of Faith Network harnesses religious support from a broad spectrum of supportive faith-based institutions.

7. Media Watchdog/Advocacy

The Triangle Foundation works with print and broadcast media all over Michigan and the United States to ensure that issues of glbt concern are covered with fairness and accuracy. The Triangle Foundation's work has established it as Michigan's leading voice on glbt issues and one of America's most respected sources dealing with hate crimes against glbt people.

8. Community Response

The Triangle Foundation works hard to respond to local activist's request for presence in communities dealing with glbt issues.

Millennium March On Washington Set For April 30, 2000

Organizers Express Enthusiastic Support for "Equality Begins at Home" State Actions

WASHINGTON — Organizers for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community's fourth March on Washington today announced the event will be held on April 30, 2000. The march aims to articulate the concerns of our community and focus our nation's attention on our quest for equality in all aspects of life.

"We expect one million of my gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered sisters and brothers and our enlightened allies to stand on the Mall and call upon our nation to live out the promise of equality under the law," said Rev. Troy D. Perry, long-time gay activist and founder of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

Organizers took steps this week to begin incorporation of a non-profit entity to handle planning, production and financial arrangements. Efforts are underway to make this a democratic process where all segments of our community are represented.

"The millennium march promises to continue its bold commitment to all people of color. I am hearing from Native Americans, Asians, African Americans, Latinos and Pacific Islanders who are ecstatic about participating," said Martin Ornelas-Quintero, executive director of the Latino Latina/o, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Organization.

Organizers also expressed their support today for the "Equality Begins at Home" actions on all 50 state capitals set for 1999.

"The Equality Begins at Home" actions enjoy the full and enthusiastic support of the organizers of the Millennium March," said Elizabeth Birch, executive director of the Human Rights Campaign. "It's imperative that we focus our energies as a movement at both the state and federal level. These two events will complement each other as together we build the momentum to achieve equality in the next century."

"I am glad to see both of these events moving towards a more collaborative process," said Jubi Headley, executive director of the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum. "This is a positive sign of progress."

"Our greatest hope as a movement lies in our commitment to work together for social change. Our passion for justice and our pledge to lift up every voice has the potential to transform town halls, state houses, and our nation's capitol," said Kerry Lobel, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

Gay Contributions

By Deb Price
The DETROIT NEWS

The gay civil rights movement has no shortage of noble causes, no shortage of lofty goals, no shortage of creative energy. What's holding us back is a lack of sufficient money.

Our struggle for social and political equality is being run on a frayed shoestring. The multitude of local, state and national gay groups trying to slay the twin dragons of ignorance and prejudice are woefully underfinanced. It's truly amazing what dedicated bands of volunteers, plus a few paid leaders, have accomplished in the past quarter century. But, oh, just imagine how much more would already be won if our hardy groups were fully funded.

The first in-depth study of gay charitable contributions helps explain gay rights groups' cash shortage: Even among those gay men and lesbians who are involved enough to be on a gay mailing list, a paltry \$15 out of every \$100 given to nonprofit organizations goes to gay political advocacy groups. That's simply not enough.

Gay donors actually contribute slightly more to nonprofits than the average American donor — 2.5 percent of personal income vs. 2.2 percent of household income. That's what "Creating Communities," a joint project by the Institute for Gay and Lesbian Strategic Studies and the Working Group on Funding Lesbian and Gay Issues, found in its survey of 2,244 gay people in Milwaukee, Philadelphia and San Francisco.

But gay people channel only 42 percent of their contributions into gay groups. Meanwhile, nongay charities get 44 percent, and the remaining 14 percent goes to AIDS work. Of the gay money given to gay groups of all sorts, barely one-third is contributed to advocacy groups and political campaigns.

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We gay Americans are the only minority still oppressed by wholesale discrimination that's written into law. Our political needs are so great; our community is so small. And as individuals, many, perhaps most, of us already feel overextended. But mainstream foundations aren't going to bankroll our movement: For every \$100 in foundation awards, less than one dime goes to gay causes. So it's up to us and our allies to find ways to give more generously.

Ask leaders of gay advocacy groups about finances and you'll keep hearing the same thing — more money would make a huge difference.

For example, another \$50,000 a year would "guarantee long-term survival" for Michigan's Triangle Foundation, says chairman Neil Hilton, a volunteer. Two paid staffers fight hate crime on a \$90,000 budget. "We're always focusing on how we're going to keep the lights and phones on," Hilton adds. (Contact the foundation at www.tri.org or 313-537-3323.)

Marriage Project Hawaii, striving for the biggest breakthrough in gay history, has just one full-time worker and a \$173,000 budget. With an extra \$50,000, it could register college-age voters before Hawaii's marriage referendum in November, says board member Tom Ramsey.

"Once people finally hear our story, we have a very generous response," he says. (Reach the project at www.xq.com/mp or 808-942-3737.)

At the National Center for Lesbian Rights, executive director Kate Kendell dreams of having 10 full-time attorneys, not just two. "Giving is increasing, but there still is a lot of apathy that somebody else will do it. ... That's how we lose custody for a lesbian mom in Alabama." Most of the \$718,000 1997 budget for NCLR, one of only four gay legal groups nationwide, came from individual gifts averaging \$110. (Contact www.nclrights.org or 415-392-6257.)

What are our real priorities? Our checkbooks know. So when we say we support gay rights, let's make sure our checkbooks agree.

(reprinted with permission of the Detroit News)

Dear Reggie White: You Just Don't Get It

By DAVID KOPAY

Reggie, you are wrong, so very wrong! Are you aware that the American Association of Psychiatrists removed homosexuality as a disorder more than 25 years ago? How can you dare to contribute to the pain of millions of Americans, especially gay teen-agers who are bullied, vilified and bashed by classmates because of extremist and outdated views on homosexuality? As a former Green Bay Packer, as a 10-year veteran of the National Football League and the World League, as a man who happens to be gay, shame, shame on you!

Like you, I feel a deep responsibility to speak out, to speak the truth. And I'm certainly not afraid to do so; As a youngster, I loved sports and the passion and competition that went with them. I was an aggressive, Type A personality, yet I was often afraid of the violence I knew was part of me. I loved team sports, especially football, and now understand that it was through football that I learned to channel my energy.

I wasn't naturally tough or gifted, but by conquering my fears and working hard I became both. It was through sports that I became a decent student; I had to be, to stay eligible to play. But my parents didn't want me to play because as an 11-year old I grew so fast I developed a painful bone disease. Doctors said that the disease could be crippling.

My parents wouldn't sign the necessary papers to allow me to compete, so I had to find a way around it. I was in constant pain, but I was lucky: I was playing.

In high school (a large all-boys Catholic one) I became the only three-sport letterman, in football, track and basketball. I earned a scholarship to the University of Washington, where I was elected co-captain of the 1964 Rose Bowl team. I was not drafted in 20 rounds, but I made the 1964 San Francisco 49ers as a free agent.

After a few years playing with the 49ers and the Detroit Lions, I was claimed off waivers by Coach Vince Lombardi, who was then with the Washington Redskins. I was thrilled, but I was also scared. Lombardi exposed a player's pluses and minuses almost immediately.

It was at this time that I was coming to grips with my true sexual identity as a gay man. I was so uncomfortable then that I could barely use the word "gay"; let alone "homosexual"; Lombardi certainly didn't know. And in his wildest dreams he couldn't have known that his soon-to-be All-Pro tight end Jerry Smith was gay, or that others in the front office were gay. How Lombardi would have reacted is hard to say. But, Reggie, I can tell you, he certainly wouldn't react as you have, even though he was a very religious man.

Given the knowledge and awareness of today's world, he would be consistent with it. He loved the people close to him. And he loved Jerry, as everyone did. Most of the players knew who was gay; they just didn't talk about it. They didn't care, and that was 1969-70.

But nothing changes without dialogue. It was only after my book was published in 1977 that people really started to address the difficulties and injustices of being a gay athlete. Reggie, you said you are going "to speak out against things that are hurting our children, that's killing off our people"; Gay folks *are* the children you speak of; they are the people. Sexual repression, alcoholism, spousal abuse, child abuse, drug addiction, loneliness, hate and ignorance are the real enemies we face. Lighten up on gay folks because we are not the enemy. Let me regress a bit.

In 1961, all University of Washington football players were required to live in the athletic dormitory. My roommate and I were the first black and white football players to share a room. We were competing for the same running back position and I soon learned that all the myths I had heard about black players were just that, myths. He was just as smart and just as dumb as the rest of us. He was our equal and, with his athletic

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ability, maybe better. But if Warren Moon had attended Washington in those days, instead of 1974-77, I doubt he would have been given a chance to play quarterback.

His race would have excluded that. In fact, most Southern colleges had no black players; You have equated gays with "liars and cheaters"; and people who are "malicious and back-stabbers," and you've said that "homosexuality is a decision"; A choice like the color of your skin is a choice. Why would you think that anyone would choose to be gay, thus putting himself into a category of people who are hated, despised and persecuted? Try being assertive, educated and a successful "faggot"; a name I have been called many times by my co-workers.

Do you know what's actually contributing to the decline of the moral character of our country? People being dishonest dealing with sexual identity issues, then defining morality only in terms of monogamous heterosexuality. What really galls me is your whining about "all the bad stuff people are saying"; about you and that "it hurts."; You say that "the Sodomite community"; is after you. And that it is because of us you didn't get your broadcasting job with CBS, as your wife has said. That God told you to go back to football and "to speak the truth"; You can't handle the truth. Here is the truth: If Jerry Smith and I had spoken out about being gay in 1969, I would have been cut for sure. And maybe Jerry wouldn't have had a 14-year N.F.L. career. Do you think the N.F.L. would have come to our defense in any form? You have your guaranteed \$20million contract. Try struggling every year, as I did, to make the final 40. I was a player who paid attention to the little things; I know I would have been a good coach. Do you think that was an option open to me after 10 years playing pro ball?

You said that "homosexuality is one of the Bible's biggest sins."; Wrong again, or else Jesus would have so stated. And if you are right, why isn't it one of the Ten Commandments?

You said that "gays can't equate their struggles to African-Americans." Wrong again.

And this one really makes me wonder about you. South Africa recently passed legislation that explicitly outlaws discrimination against gays in its constitution. If Nelson Mandela can support gay rights, maybe there is hope for you, too. Today, I'm attending the Gay Games in Amsterdam, in the Netherlands, whose constitution also protects gays, and where sexual orientation is not even an issue. I am proud to participate in this international event.

Recently, I participated in the International Summit on Ethics in Sports, given by the University of South Florida in Tampa. As panelists, we examined how athletes are identified and stigmatized by their gender, race and sexual orientation. A black lesbian, who is a former athlete and now a college professor, rose from the audience and spoke about how my book, "The David Kopay Story," empowered her sense of self. I felt as if I

were getting ready for a game and the national anthem were playing.

Two of the six panelists — Todd Boyd and Jeffrey Sammons — are distinguished black professors who condemned your statements and were appalled — their word, not mine — by your attack on gays. They agreed with what Nike's chairman, Phil Knight, said: "Reggie White is in the simplest terms not evil, he's just crazy."

Do you really care about all our nation's youths, as you say you do? Do you know how many youths commit suicide yearly, especially because of their sexual orientation? I seriously, at one time, thought about it as a way to escape all the loathing and self-loathing. Do you know how many youths are alcoholics or addicted to drugs? The figures are staggering. The N.F.L. has hired a number of former players as substance abuse counselors. Do you think that maybe there are deeper reasons for abuse problems than just achieving the high? If Jerry Smith were alive today, he would give deeper and more profound testimony. Do you know how many times Jerry was escorted home by the police — for being under the influence of something? Many. Yes, society's condemnation contributes to alcohol and drug abuse. I know that there but for the grace of God go I.

In 1978 I addressed the American Bar Association about the need to include sexual orientation in recommending our laws. In 1976, in Congress, I lobbied to do the same thing. I also addressed the American Association of Pediatricians, and said: "The biggest fag haters I know are the ones who are most confused about their sexuality. I know because I was one of them."

In my own family, love has overcome almost all the fears and anxieties about my being gay. I feel blessed now with my sexual orientation. It has helped me understand myself. I know that to love and be loved is by far my strongest emotion. I have had a card in my bathroom for more than 30 years that says, "The greatest gift we can give to another is the vision and beauty of life." Isn't that what we all should be trying to do?

Reggie, as a minister, I hope you get it.

(David Kopay is a floor covering salesman in Hollywood, Calif., where he has lived and worked for the last 18 years.)

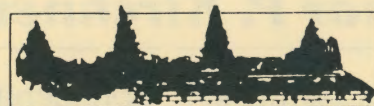
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Major Update To Domestic Partner Benefit Provider List

Within the last three years, a long list of major U.S. corporations have been offering their employees a variety of "domestic partner" benefits, once only available to those spouses who could be legally married. These firms include Apple Computer, AT&T, Bank of America, Capital Cities/ABC, Dow Chemical, Hearst Corporation, IBM, Polaroid, etc. Public and private employers began offering these benefits to same-sex couples in 1985.

Partners Task Force for Gay & Lesbian Couples began tracking these offerings in 1987. The Task Force's recently updated Domestic Partner Provider List nearly doubles the previous listings to include more than 650 employers. It is divided into subsections: Private Employers, Colleges & Private Schools, Governments, Unions, Registration for Domestic Partners, Registered Partnerships, and Insurance Providers.

One way businesses remain competitive is to offer job benefits. Sometimes, these benefits can amount to a third of an employee's salary and, for some, they provide insurance for their partners' children that would otherwise be unobtainable.

The Domestic Partner Benefit Provider List is available for free on the Partners Task Force Web site located at: www.buddybuddy.com

A paper print-out of the list, along with "Tips on Gaining Workplace Benefits" may be ordered for \$16 by sending a check to Partners Task Force, Box 9685, Seattle, WA 98109.

Hawaii And Alaska Update

TO: National Freedom to Marry Coalition State Partners, Allies, Friends, Clergy, and Local Activists

FROM: The National Freedom to Marry Coalition

The countdown to the crucial votes in Hawaii and Alaska has begun.

On November 3, voters there will decide whether to ratify or reject discriminatory anti-gay amendments that aim to write gay and lesbian inequality into their state constitutions and burden our advance toward

winning the freedom to marry.

Both the Hawaii and Alaska amendments are products of the fierce national right-wing assault on our lives, families, and equality. Both are intended to keep us from winning the freedom to marry, a breakthrough that is otherwise so close to being within reach, especially in Hawaii. Both are funded and pushed by a group of organizations, and even some religious entities, that fully appreciate how significant it would be if we secure such a breakthrough. Both amendments are aimed at strangling our baby in its cradle in Hawaii and Alaska, as well as shutting down the vital national discussion about our freedom to marry and our entitlement to full equality.

Here is what the future holds in store:

August and September — In Hawaii (and Alaska) right-wing forces around the country will continue to flood in money to gear up their attacks. In the rest of the country, while continuing their assault on gay people generally, our opponents will hope to squelch any public dialogue about our freedom to marry. They know that the more we get non-gay people to keep talking about our stories (rather than stereotypes), hearing from couples and our non-gay clergy, families, or neighbors, the more the public becomes receptive to our freedom to marry (and ready to accept it once a breakthrough comes from the courts, as we hope it will soon).

September/October — In Hawaii (and Alaska), these opponents will launch their media attack campaign to try to frighten people there into voting against our equality. In the rest of the country, they will try to distort or stifle the non-gay dialogue about our freedom to marry, putting forth stereotypes rather than the truth about our lives and what marriage means. They will try to usurp the mantle of religion and "family values" as if they belonged to their side, rather than to those of us fighting to protect all families. They will gamble that we will be distracted and fail to speak out, and thereby miss the opportunities to reach out to fair-minded potential allies in the non-gay world, especially clergy and community leaders.

— Also in September/October, the Vermont Supreme Court will most likely schedule oral argument in the promising freedom-to-marry case brought by local Vermont couples and attorneys and New England's GLAD.

Like the attacks in Hawaii aimed at blocking the Hawaii Supreme Court's final ruling, and like the vicious backlash campaign in Alaska, the Vermont Supreme Court argument will be yet another golden opportunity for all of us to focus people's attention on how inequality harms our

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families. We must show people how (as with race discrimination in marriage a generation ago) the government does not have a good reason for discrimination in civil marriage.

November — In Hawaii (and Alaska), the voters will ratify or reject the discriminatory amendment proposals. They will thus either making an important statement about preserving the Bill of Rights, independent judiciary, and equality under the law for all, or invite a new wave of litigation. If we beat back these amendments, the path will be clear for what we hope will be a swift decision from the Hawaii Supreme Court. We could see oral argument, a decision, and, we hope, the breakthrough victory by the end of the year. Such a breakthrough would allow same-sex couples to wed, and allow, non-gay people all across the country to see that, in fact, the sky doesn't fall and equality is good for all. A whole new chapter of unprecedented possibilities and transformation will then open nationwide.

New York Passes Landmark Domestic Partner Law

Unmarried couples including gays and lesbians in New York City will be treated the same as those who are married under landmark legislation passed in late June.

The law, one of the broadest domestic partner policies in the United States that gay rights advocates described as historic, addresses a host of emotional issues and details of everyday life facing couples regardless of their sexual orientation.

It allows bereavement leave for city employees, visitation rights in city-run facilities, tenancy succession rights and permits partners to be buried together in a city-owned cemetery. The estimated 8,700 registered domestic partners in New York City will also be required to meet the same civic responsibilities as married couples.

The law was approved overwhelming, 39-7, in a City Council vote to cheers and applause in the public gallery. But before the vote, a group of Hasidic rabbis gathered in protest outside City Hall, saying Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and city officials would be cursed and wiped out because of their support for the legislation. The measure passed by 39 votes to 7 with one abstention.

The law, approved by Republican Giuliani last month, recognizes domestic partners as equal to spouses in a range of services, benefits, city employee issues and responsibilities. It fulfilled a campaign promise Giuliani made to gay rights advocates last year.

An Historic Moment For American Gays And Lesbians

Office of the Press Secretary —THE WHITE HOUSE
William J. Clinton, President —May 28, 1998

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Today I have signed an Executive Order entitled Further Amendment to Executive Order 11478, Equal Employment Opportunity in the Federal Government. The Order provides a uniform policy for the Federal Government to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in the federal civilian workforce and states that policy for the first time in an Executive Order of the President.

It has always been the practice of this Administration to prohibit discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation in the civilian workforce, and most federal agencies and department have taken actions, such as the issuance of policy directives or memoranda from the agency heads, to memorialize that policy. The Executive Order I have signed today will ensure that there is a uniform policy throughout the Federal Government by adding sexual orientation to the list of categories for which discrimination is prohibited in Executive Order 11478 (i.e. race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, or age).

This Executive Order states Administration policy but does not and cannot create any new enforcement rights (such as the ability to proceed before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). Those rights can be granted only by legislation passed by the Congress, such as the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. I again call upon Congress to pass this important piece of civil rights legislation which would extend these basic employment discrimination protections to all gay and lesbian Americans. Individuals should not be denied a job on the basis of something that has no relationship to their ability to perform their work.

UPDATE

In response to Clinton's executive order, Joel Hefley (R-Colorado) sponsored an amendment to a bill which would have negated this. His bill was expected to pass, but surprisingly, it was soundly defeated by the House. Many Republicans joined the Democrats in affirming protection of gays and lesbians in the employment of the federal government.

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Other new appointments this year to the GLV 100 include Volkswagen, Subaru, Sara Lee, Pfizer, Bristol Myers Squibb, and Mattel.

For more information contact Grant Lukenbill at (212) 727 8257 or Howard Tharsing at (415) 695-8766. For information on the Wall Street Project or a copy of the Wall Street Project's Equality Principles, contact Diane Bratcher at 212 870-2296.

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 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 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

Amy Elena Cook, MSW CSW

affirming & confidential
 counseling services

(616) 932-8699

104 S. Union, Suite 203
 Traverse City, MI 49684