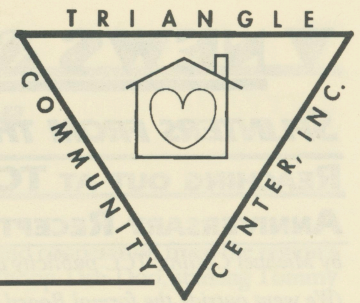


Triangle Community Center News & Views

Free to Members and Subscribers

Vol.8, No.3
March 1997

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HIV TESTING AND COUNSELING AT TCC

PROGRAM WILL BE OPERATED BY NORWALK HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

The Norwalk Health Department, in partnership with Triangle Community Center, has begun to offer outreach education, risk-reduction, counseling and HIV testing at the Community Center as of February, 1997.

The goals of this partnership are:

- ▼ To increase group and individual knowledge about the AIDS virus and how people get it.
- ▼ To provide individual risk assessment that will help people better understand their own vulnerability to HIV infection.
- ▼ To change familiar behavior and introduce alternative options for safer sex.
- ▼ To bring about change from high risk to low risk sexual behaviors.
- ▼ To help prevent the spread of HIV.

MANY HEARTS ♥♥♥ ONE COMMUNITY

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MARCH AND APRIL

SAT, MAR 1	Center Stage '97, Bread & Roses benefit to banish the end-of-winter blues. An all new multidimensional party with Laura Chandler, Jerry Halliday, and Mollyboy. Discovery Museum, Bridgeport, \$30/35/20. 8 pm. See FYI for more info.
SAT, MAR 1	The Imperial Court Of Connecticut presents "Coronation IV - A Night in the Rose Garden" at the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill. \$50 donation includes cocktails, sit-down dinner, live entertainment, and crowning of the new Emperor and Empress. See FYI for more info.
SUN, MAR 2	Sunday at the Center 4-6 pm holds a discussion of bicycling, local gyms, and other ways of getting back into shape for the coming beach season.
SUN MAR 2	Bloodroot Restaurant and bookstore begins month-long 20th anniversary celebration with wine, cheese & juice tasting, 85 Ferris Bridgeport, 5-7 pm. See article for full schedule of events.
SAT, MAR 8	TCC Friendraiser at the home of Peter McKnight and Joe Letendre in Fairfield, 7-10 pm. Light buffet, BYOB. Note that the date is a Saturday. See article for directions.
FRI, MAR 21	and Sat, Mar 22, Children from the Shadows, annual Hartford area conference on lesbigay youth, for social service/mental health providers, educators, family members and youth. For info or to work on the conference, call Robin Passariello, MSW, at (860) 344-1777.
SAT, MAR 22	CT Gay Men's Chorus presents "Out!, the Whole Story." Real people, real stories, now a full-length theatrical event. 8 pm, Shubert Theater, New Haven. \$20. Info 1 800-644-CGMC. Box office 203-562-5666. See article.
SUN, MAR 23	CT Gay Men's Chorus presents "Out!, the Whole Story." 2 pm, Shubert Theater, New Haven.
TUE, MAR 25	Center Forum: So You Can't Wait to get Married? A panel presents legal and spiritual ways to cement your same-sex family while waiting to become legal. Triangle Community Center, 7:30 pm.
SAT, MAR 29	CT Gay Men's Chorus presents "Out!, the Whole Story." 8 pm, Shubert Theater, New Haven.
SAT, APR 5	and Sun, Apr 6 Annual Gay/Lesbian Business Expo, New York Coliseum, NYC. Watch for more info next month.
SUN, APR 6	Sunday at the Center, Spring cleaning time, 2-5 pm.
FRI, APR 25	Another Octave, the Connecticut Women's Chorus presents Music in My Mothers House, Pequot Library Southport 8pm. Other concerts Apr 26 in New Haven, May 2 in New Haven, and May 3 in Hartford. Tickets \$10 advance, \$12 door. Info (203) 772-0639. See article.

For the latest update on What's Happening in the area check our TCC home page on the internet.

<http://members.aol.com/tccenter>

The Norwalk Health Department has provided an educator/counselor to provide outreach services to our community. These services will be completely confidential and will be offered one evening a week for three hours from 3:30-6:30 pm at the Triangle Community Center, by appointment only. Telephone counseling will also be available.

The counselor, Karen Gorman, MSW, has been counseling and testing persons at both the Norwalk and Greenwich Health Departments for the past several years. Until recently she has co-lead Mid-Fairfield Aids Project's Support Group for "Friends & Family." Currently she is volunteering as a buddy to a person with AIDS. Karen is a family therapist with a private practice in Old Greenwich.

If interested, please call 854-7979 or 854-7779

▼ NEWS & VIEWS

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

REACHING OUT AT TCC'S 6TH ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION

by Michael Collins, TCC publicity chair

(We went outside the formal Board of Directors for this month's report from another one of TCC's principal players)

Much of the gay community's problem with mainstream society has been ignorance about homosexuals. Demagogues have been able to capitalize on the public's fear of the unknown

It has been my feeling that, as much as I love Greenwich Village and Chelsea, the battle for acceptance will be won here in the towns of Fairfield County and the small towns across the nation. With that in mind, I decided to invite to our 6th anniversary Reception on January 5 the three U.S. Congressmen who represent Fairfield County, as well as the mayor and/or first selectmen of each of the 22 towns in Fairfield County. There are homosexual constituencies in each of these little towns, such as Sherman, Easton, Weston and New Canaan, just as there are in Manhattan.

To my pleasant surprise, two first selectmen attended, both Republicans: Paul Audley of Fairfield and Richard Bond of New Canaan. This is a typical turnout for ANY event, I have found from my quarter century in media.

First Selectman Audley had not known about TCC and was pleased to know about us, since he said he has had people inquire about gay support groups and services. As followup, his office invited me to write a page on TCC for the Newsletter received by all Fairfield town government employees, and I have done so.

In addition, we received letters from Danbury Mayor Gene Enriquez and Stratford Town Manager Mark Barnhart congratulating us on our 6th anniversary. And I received telephone calls from Bridgeport Mayor Joseph Ganim and Ridgefield's Republican First selectwoman, Sue Manning.

In addition, all three Fairfield County U.S. Congressmen, whom I contacted with invitations, responded with letters. I did so after contacting TCC president Thomas Mariconda, whose warm support and encouragement helps spur enthusiasm for our Center.

A spokesman for the new Democrat congressman in the 5th district in northern Fairfield County, James Maloney, who just defeated right-winger Gary Franks, called with a message wishing us the best and asking us to keep him in mind for future events.

Congressman Chris Shays of the 4th district in lower Fairfield County, who had a conflict this time, but in September graciously did attend the Connecticut Lambda Legal Defense reception in Fairfield, sent a letter.

In part, Mr. Shays' letter said, "Over the years, your organization has made a difference in the community by providing many gays and lesbians with support, education and recreation. Thank you for all the good work you are doing. Your efforts are making the difference in the lives of so many people."

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro whose 3rd district encompasses Stratford in Fairfield County and greater New Haven, sent an equally heartening message.

She said, "I envision a future in which all Americans are assured full equality under the law. As a legislator, I feel the most important issue facing the gay community is discrimination. We must work to ensure that gay men and women can work at their jobs without the fear of dismissal because of their sexual preference. We must also recognize the value of committed relationships by extending health, pension and insurance benefits to gay partners."

This column is normally written by members of the TCC Board of Directors, on a rotating basis.

MARCH FRIENDRAISER

The next TCC Friendraiser will be held Saturday, March 8 from 7 to 10 pm at the home of Peter McKnight and Joe Letendre at 89 Robin Lane in Fairfield. There will be a light buffet. BYOB. A contribution of \$8 for members, \$10 non-members, will be accepted, "more if you can, less if you can't." Note that the date is a week earlier than the usual third Friday schedule.

DIRECTIONS:

From I-95 get off at exit 22. If coming from Norwalk and the west, continue forward at end of ramp to the light. Make a left onto North Benson Rd. If coming from Bridgeport and the east, make a right at the end of the ramp onto North Benson Rd. Go 1.5 miles and make a right onto Reid Street. Make the third right onto Robin Lane. It is the 3rd house on right, white with black shutters.

From the Merritt get off at exit 44. Head south on Black Rock Turnpike towards Fairfield. At the 4th light make a right onto Stillson Rd (heading towards Fairfield Univ.). Bear left at the next light and make the 2nd left onto Reid St. Make your third right onto Robin Lane. It is the 3rd house on right. White with black shutters.

If lost call 203/330-9595.

WORTH REPEATING

"REMOVE MY NAME FROM YOUR ROOSTER":

THE BEST OF HOMOPHOBIC MAIL

- from the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund newsletter, via the internet

One of the joys of working for a gay organization is the singular pleasure we get from reading the daily dose of hate mail. We've arranged our favorite snippets in a letter form so we could share with you the best of the Beavis and Buttheads of the biblically inspired:

"Dear Faggots, Dikes, Sodomites, Lissbians, and Queer Bates: I recently came across your address in a magazine I was reading and a plea for donations to support your perversions caught my eye. Their is no excuse for you. Your all sick, sick, sick, sick, sick, sick, sick, sick, sick, sick. Gays are barf-inducing because you know what they do in private. Sex organs are not very sanitarilly clean. Regardless of a man's ability as an artist, dress designer, or choreographer (three favorite professions, I'm sure) the bottom line is that he enjoys [a long, explicit and obviously well-researched description of gay male sex]. I'm sure that lesbians engage in similar disgusting acts [no description: they still can't figure out what we do in bed!]."

"Who is Barry Goldwater compared to God? Check the following versus of scripture: Genises, Romens, Leviticals, and Profits. God created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve. The Bible makes it clear that Jesus preferred straight men. That is why God sent you Aides. In our day Aids were helpers in the principals office.

"The homophiles are nothing short of a hatred spreading group that has joined forces with the KKK, and the brown shirters and the anti-semetics. Homos have no right to teach in our public schools. You just want to pray on our children and lead them in a stray. There isn't a homosexual alive who fought and died for his country like we did.

"My wife is not a lesbian and neither is my son. I've never had sex with a man and neither has my wife. I hope that your campaigning for homosexuals is due to your being unknoweable rather than you thinking the things they do are just 'sexual preference.' Keep your sexual perversions to yourself and I'll keep my sexual perversions to myself.

"I also challenge the word 'homophobic' as fear of hobosexuals. I'm not homophobic—I have no fear of your type, only contempt. And now you have homophobia to wave around just like the jews have anti-semenic. So lets get rid of the word homophobia: How about "Homo-Blyiccch" (gag, choke, vomit)? Sure, you can call me homophonic if you like but I know what's right and what's wrong. When all you perverts are in hell it will be a much better place.

"I am curious about how you got our name. I suppose that's a secret you'll keep buried in your bosom. I do not encourage anyone likely to place me on your mailing list to get more such weird offers. I demand that you remove me from your rooster!"

As you can see, we have met the enemy, and they are illiterate.

TCC NEWS

CAN'T WAIT TO GET

MARRIED?

The Center Forum on Tuesday March 25th will be devoted to ways in which to honor and cement existing gay and lesbian families, while gathering up pennies for that Hawaiian wedding. The list of panelists is "in formation" but will cover such topics as marriages in those churches which perform same-sex marriages and legal documents to insure that one's partner in life will be able to function as just that should something unforeseen occur — power of attorney, durable power of attorney, joint property and the like. The Forum is set to begin at 7:30 PM.

HOEY REJOINS BOARD

Len Horey, former TCC Board member and president has signed up to serve another term on the Board of Directors. Len left the Board a year ago after serving two years, during which he held the office of treasurer as well as president. Last month, he received one of the volunteer awards recognizing TCC members who have performed outstanding service to the organization. Now, responding to the need for more dedicated people to serve on the Board, he has re-applied and been re-elected. Len lives in Shelton with his partner, Damian Kane. We welcome him back to a major role in the ongoing life of the Center. - RH

LESBIAN LIT GROUP BEARS

FRUIT

For its March 4 meeting, the Lesbian Literature Reading Group has chosen "Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit," by Jeanette Winterson as the book for discussion. The plot revolves around a young English girl coming to terms with her sexuality despite her Christian fundamentalist background.

The group meets at the Center the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30 pm. Copies of "Oranges" can be found in the TCC library, your local library or bookstore, or ordered from Bloodroot (203) 576-9168. For more information please call Michele (203) 316-0333. - MS

SUNDAYS AT THE CENTER GET

PHYSICAL

On Sunday, March 2, 4-6 pm the theme will be "Time to Get in Shape." The March Sunday at the Center is devoted to showing some options for getting back in shape after the winter (however bad or mild it ultimately ends up being). A long-time member of the local bicycle club (Marianne) will explain what that group is all about and [hopefully] others will show up to discuss the gyms in the area, swimming at the Y, and other ways to slim down for summer.

On the first Sunday of April, the theme is "High Time for Spring Cleaning." The afternoon will be devoted to cleaning the office as a good-will gesture for the next Board of Directors. If you have a vested interest in any of the stuff under the table or just want to help out, get your butt in to the Center on April 6 between 2 and 5 in the afternoon. - MS

GREAT MEDIA COVERAGE FOR WHOOP-DEE-DOO!

by Michael Collins, TCC publicity chair

The Triangle Community Center received strong support and cooperation from the region's media in promoting the four performances in January of Whoop-Dee-Doo, starring Tommy Femia, and directed by Scott M. Robbins.

Although I am not certain how many media provided coverage of the show, more than 30 have been identified, including WTNH channel 8 New Haven, which provided a 3-minute interview with Tommy Femia, the star of the show, on its 5:30 pm news show on opening night. Channel 8 did so, despite a major breaking news story that night, the tragic plane crash in which the pilot was overcome by fumes after taking off from Long Island and crashed in New Hampshire.

Some papers provided spectacular coverage, including Greenwich Time, Stamford Advocate, Norwalk Hour, Danbury News Times and Connecticut Post, to name just some.

The shows were sold out or virtually sold out each evening, with the proceeds benefitting Stamford CARES, Mid Fairfield AIDS Project, and Bread and Roses of Georgetown. (Soon we will be announcing the final results of money raised as well as a list of volunteers who made this project a success.)

I will be writing to each of the media that provided us coverage to express our thanks.

I extend my thanks for the strong cooperation of many involved in the project, whose assistance helped accomplish the coverage we received. Those who helped me included Scott M. Robbins, who kept in very close touch despite his overwhelming schedule, as well as Dan Kelly, Ron Dreyer, Jonathan Johnson, Michael Pavlicin, Don Buxton, Roger Hooverman, and Walter Dembowski

Here is a list of media that provided coverage that at least listed the show:

WTNH channel 8, 5:30 pm news, 3 -minute interview, plus promo at start of news and again at 5:45 pm.

Yankee Magazine — full listing as one of the picks of the month in New England.

Connecticut magazine — full listing

New York Times (Connecticut Weekly section)

Fairfield County Tourism Bureau Winter 97 - major listing (distributed at all train stations, in all daily newspapers, and delivered to many households in mail)

Lewisboro Ledger (Westchester County)

Bedford Record Review (Westchester County)

Greenwich Time — full page front cover with color photo ~ and huge story on front of Sunday arts page

Stamford Advocate — full page front cover with color photos and huge story on front of Sunday arts page

Norwalk Hour — nearly full page feature with photos and huge story

Danbury News Times — excellent review of show by theatre critic, with color photos

Connecticut Post — front page of Friday arts section with color photos

New Haven Register — top of page in Sunday arts section with photos

Hartford Courant — quarter page with large photo of Tommy as Judy in Thursday Calendar magazine section

Darien News Review

Ridgefield Press (several weeks)

Wilton Bulletin

Wilton Villager

Redding Pilot

Weston Forum

Newtown Bee (3 weeks in a row)

Westport Minuteman (half page)

Westport News

The Guide (lower Fairfield County)

Fairfield Citizen

Fairfield Minuteman (half page with pictures)

Huntington Herald (major story with pictures)

Fairfield County Weekly

Metroline (with pictures, 3 weeks in a row)

In The Life of Dutchess County

IN Newsweekly (weekly covering New England)

News and Views of TCC, several months of promotional coverage

These are the ones we know about so far. Thank you again to all.

Contributors to this issue: Bloodroot Collective Winston Clark, Mike Collins, Alex Garbera, Tom Mariconda, Peter McKnight, Mary Priestman Lloyd Rubin, Tom Meyers, Marianne Seggerman, Michele Stone.

Deadline for the April Newsletter will be Saturday, March 8. We can not guarantee that material received after that date will be included in the April News & Views.

▼ NEWS & VIEWS

LETTERS AND E-MAIL

HELP FOR GAY, LESBIAN & QUESTIONING KIDS

I am writing to introduce you to We Are Family.

WAF is a young non-profit organization that is committed to take a non-threatening, non-confrontational message of understanding and acceptance of lesbians and gays into the straight community by means of direct mail. Our particular focus is the groups which include individuals most likely to deal with young people—teachers, guidance counselors, ministers, school librarians, psychologists—and our immediate geographical focus is the Southeast. What we are doing can easily be extended to other areas.

We have published the second issue of Plain Talk, entitled "Consider the Children," that I will send if you will forward a surface address. We are trying to build a network of people across the country who are supportive of what we are doing.

Tom Myers, We Are Family Foundation, PO Box 30734, Charleston SC, 29417, 803/937-0000, e-mail wearfam@charleston.net.

[Editor's note- this e-mail message was forwarded to us by Lester Sharlach of P-FLAG. I have no additional information about the group.]

A GREAT NIGHT IN NEW HAVEN

[Note - Our roving reporter Mike Collins faxed this breathless report following the February 8 ribbon cutting ceremony and dance at the New Haven Gay and Lesbian Community Center. New Haven Mayor DeStefano cut the ribbon and used the opportunity to make a strong supportive public statement about the role of gays and lesbians in the community. The opening was given major space in the New Haven Register, as well as the Connecticut Post and other papers. - Ed

It was a great night!

WFSB Channel 3, WTNH Channel 8, and WTIC Channel 61 all had full reports on their 11 p. news. One scary sign that we still have a way to go: two guys dancing from Fairfield County caught by the Channel 8 camera had the cameraman erase their images, for fear of reprisal from their bosses.

TCC president Tom Mariconda and former presidents Justine Michaud, Mike Pavlicin, and Len Horey were there with their lovers to express TCC's good wishes to our sister center.

New Haven was spared the snowstorm that reached as far as Stamford and Long Island. We used gay power to wish it away, just the way the Rev Pat Robertson wished away the '85 hurricane. Remember that?

And John Allen read special greetings from Candace Gingrich, sister of Newt!
- Mike Collins.

GAY PEN PALS WANTED FOR PRISONERS

I am the Pen Pal Coordinator (worldwide) for Prisoner Services International (PSI). We are non-profit, and we do not solicit funds; we are funded by several humanitarian organizations. I am retired and volunteer my full time to these efforts. I receive no pay, only the pleasure of being able to help others.

We choose to help only those prisoners who committed non-violent crimes. Many of those seeking Pen Pals are professional people, men & women, many MD's, lawyers, bankers, politicians, teachers, accountants, and just plain people who made a mistake and are lonely and bored in prison.

Many of those requesting Pen Pals have been neglected or abandoned by their family and friends because they are serving prison time.

They would welcome your letters, cards, clippings, humor, etc. Unfortunately there is no e-mail available in prisons, so regular mail is a must. Some don't even have radio, TV, or books. Some will be out soon, others have long sentences to serve.

Please volunteer to write. For more information, e-mail me and I'll be happy to provide names and details, or to answer any questions you may have. We need Pen Pals... a few minutes of your time will make a world of a difference in the lives of these people locked inside.

Thank you,

Lloyd S. Rubin, Prisoner Services International
rubin@panama.c-com.net

[Editor's note: this letter was e-mailed to us at News Views@aol.com from the above address. I have no additional information about the organization.]

EDITOR'S DESK

WHO NEEDS A NEWSLETTER?

Next month will mark the 36th and final issue of *News & Views* under my editorship. March marks the end of my three-year term on the TCC Board of Directors, and this seems the right time to retire as *N&V* editor as well, and pass the torch on to a new person with fresh ideas.

Unfortunately, as of press time, no one has yet committed themselves to take on the job. Does that mean this may be the final issue of *News & Views*, period? What would happen if TCC went for a while without a monthly newsletter. How important is it?

I have always felt it essential that the TCC have a regular newsletter. Here's why:

- The *News & Views* keeps TCC members and friends up-to-date about discussion groups, social activities, fundraisers and other special events at the Center.
- It gives us news about what's happening throughout the local lesbian, community as well as within the TCC.
- It provides a forum for the expression of ideas and exchange of opinions among our readers.
- Through hundreds of copies distributed in bookstores and libraries, it makes a positive lesbian presence in the broader community, and attracts newcomers to the Center.
- And last but not least, it provides a medium for lesbian and gay-friendly business and services to advertise to our community, and a way for the rest of us to give our business to our own.

Do we need a newsletter? For the last three years, I have made my opinion abundantly clear. Now it's time for someone else to answer that question. Maybe, if you've read this far, it's *you*.

- Roger Hooverman

TRIVIA

by Seggerman

ANSWER TO FEBRUARY

The writer who came out in a New York Times review of the art of Ross Bleckner was architectural critic Herbert Muscamp, in an article not on Ross Bleckner, but on the Guggenheim Museum.

QUESTION FOR MARCH

Who said the following about Congressman Bob Barr, chief sponsor of last summer's Defense of Marriage Act: "Which of his own marriages is he trying to protect, the first, the second or the third?" A hint: It was not Elizabeth Birch.

▼ NEWS & VIEWS

F. Y. I.

BLOODROOT CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

Bloodroot, a feminist vegetarian restaurant and bookstore at 85 Ferris St. in Bridgeport, is celebrating its twentieth anniversary in March with a program of special events.

In a formal invitation, the members of the Bloodroot Collective, Selma Miriam, Betsey Beaven and Noel Furie, said:

"At Bloodroot, we are celebrating our 20th anniversary in the month of March. We are proud of our persistence and grateful for your appreciation of our work and food.

"We have attempted to make our vegetarian menu one of the best in the country.

"We continue because of the good women who work with us and because of your encouragement and friendship. Together with us, you have helped make bloodroot more than just a restaurant... it is a community.

"Thank you. Please celebrate with us during the month of March."

Special events to celebrate Bloodroot's twentieth anniversary include:

March 2: Wine and cheese, pate and juice tasting (\$5)

March 9: Vegetarian potluck - bring your favorite dish to share (free)

March 16: Wine and cheese, pate and juice tasting (\$5)

March 23: Vegetarian potluck (free)

March 30: Beer tasting, cheese, pate and juice (\$5)

Also available during March are new recipes to supplement your Political Palate cookbook, a photography retrospective of Bloodroot's 20 years, and a 20% off sale at the Bookstore.

All events are 5:00 - 7:30 pm. Both men and women are welcome. For more information, call (203) 576-9168.

BREAD & ROSES OPENS APAC PROGRAM IN S. NORWALK

Stop by and see our new Center. Located at 50 Water Street in South Norwalk, it houses a new *Bread & Roses* program called "A Positive Alternative Center" (APAC). Come around back to our main entrance, and we'll warm you with tea or coffee, and welcome you to our great new space.

We opened quietly on December 16, and we're just getting the program going. We need lots of help to furnish APAC, and we welcome drop-in guests.

APAC is a place for people with HIV and AIDS to gather, receive alternative therapies, socialize, use our reading and video library, and hear presentations by experts on wellness and life. The Center is a focus point for HIV wellness and learning about both traditional and complementary treatments. We get many offers from generous therapists: "I'll donate weekly massage sessions to HIV positive people." "I'll come and teach stress reduction techniques." APAC is a place where this can happen.

APAC will foster collaborative partnerships between people living with HIV/AIDS, their physicians, and alternative therapy experts to maximize wellness and quality of life. Already friends in Danbury and Stamford who are HIV positive are talking about taking the train to South Norwalk to be with us at the Center. We're excited about it and invite your excitement too.

We welcome your ideas as we start up the program. Call Livia Fiordelisi, Program Coordinator, at 203/855-1485 any time with questions or suggestions.

- from the February 1997 APAC newsletter.

TWO BIG SHOWS MARCH 1

Center Stage '97, a Bread & Roses benefit to banish the end-of-winter blues. It's an all new multidimensional party with contemporary folk/pop singer Laura Chandler, puppeteer/impressionist Jerry Halliday, and cabaret singer Mollyboy (aka Deian McBryde). At the Discovery Museum, Bridgeport, tickets \$30 advance, \$35 door, \$20 student. Doors open 8 pm for pre-concert reception with cash bar. For more info, call B&R (203) 855-1485. Tickets, call (203) 834-5855.

The Imperial Court Of Connecticut presents "Coronation IV - A Night in the Rose Garden" at the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill, Rocky Hill, CT (off I-91 exit 23). \$50 donation includes cocktails, sit-down dinner, live entertainment, and crowning of the new Emperor and Empress of the Nutmeg Empire. It's part of a weekend-long drag affair, and special room rates are available. The show, sponsored by Project 100, benefits the Hartford Gay & Lesbian Community Center and the G/L Health Collective. For info, call the Hartford Community Center (860) 724-5542.

CT GAY MEN'S CHORUS: "OUT! THE WHOLE STORY"

Real people, real stories. "Out!" the one-act musical that has thrilled audiences around the country becomes a full-scale theatrical event.

You may have seen "Out!" last spring. It was only a small part of the emotional powerhouse that is "Out! The Whole Story." This year you'll hear many more true stories from our guys, and also from their mothers and fathers.

Mom and Dad are the unspoken part of coming out. On learning they have a gay or lesbian child, they also make a journey to accept and love their gay children. "Out! The Whole Story" will tell their stories — human, unexpected, funny and sad.

To learn their stories, we sent questionnaires to parents of our singers. Applaud the honesty of mothers, fathers and sons learning about each other. Because of them, "Out! The Whole Story" will be unlike anything you have ever witnessed.

And it will be one of the most joyful evenings you will ever spend. The warmth and humor in these families' stories is a tribute to the human spirit. Join us at the Shubert Theater on March 22, 23, or 29.

More laughter. More tears. All true.

- Winston Clark, director, Connecticut Gay Men's Chorus (from *High Notes*, the CGMC newsletter.)

CONNECTICUT WOMEN'S CHORUS

An Unconventional Mother's Day Concert

Mother's Day. For some it's cause to celebrate an enduring and sustaining relationship. For others it's a time to confront complexities and difficulties, perhaps even a time to mourn. It can be a day to laugh with the person who told you the first stories you remember. It can be an occasion to connect with other relatives, or even with historical figures who hold special meaning for us.

All of these facets will be explored with humor, compassion, a sense of history, and superb musicianship when Another Octave: Connecticut Women's Chorus presents its 1997 spring concert: *Music In My Mother's House*. You'll hear music our mothers danced to and listened to on the radio; songs they sang to us and songs about the pleasures and sorrows in our relationships.

Founded in the fall of 1990, Another Octave: Connecticut Women's Chorus has been delighting audiences in Connecticut, Florida and New York with their energetic performances and a repertoire ranging widely over time and place. While the 40 member chorus often performs standard concert pieces, their focus is on the music — traditional and contemporary, serious and humorous — which reflects women's lives and experiences.

Program highlights for *Music In My Mother's House* include Holly Near's poignant *Simply Love*, Ferron's lyrical *Testimony*, the title piece *Music In My Mother's House*, and *Harriet Tubman*, a rousing tribute to a woman whose courage rescued and fortified hundreds of her "children". The old pop standard *Shop Around* will take on a new meaning when AO/CWC performs it. Add some doo-wop, a bit of Cole Porter, a little Bobby McFerrin and you have something for everybody and her mother, grandmother, aunt or favorite gym teacher.

Performances are Friday, April 25 in Southport at the Pequot Library; Saturday, April 26 at the Episcopal Church of St. Paul & St. James in New Haven (corner Chapel and Olive); Friday, May 2 at the Unitarian Society of New Haven, 700 Hamden Turnpike, Hamden; and Saturday, May 3 at the Community Center, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford. All concerts begin at 8 pm. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door. Seniors and children, \$7. For more information about the concerts and to obtain tickets call (203) 772-0639 or (860) 826-6815.

HOMOPHOBIC RESTAURANT CHAIN COMES TO MILFORD

A store of the Cracker Barrel chain has just opened in the Woodmont section of Milford, around the Mayflower Diner and the Milford Jai-Alai. Cracker Barrel is infamous for issuing a corporate policy to remove employees that "failed to demonstrate heterosexual values," i.e., fire all the gays. One lesbian cook, Cheryl Summerville, became a heroine for fighting back against the policy. The policy was denied, but not retracted, and a statement of non-discrimination never issued, despite shareholder pressure from the City of New York and other share holders. It remains to be seen whether the Connecticut store intends to disregard corporate policy — or flout state law. In case you wish to inquire, here is the store manager's name and address: Calvin Horst, Cracker Barrel Olde Country Store, 30 Research Drive, Milford, Connecticut 06460. - MS

NH STUDY GROUP FORMING FOR "A COURSE IN MIRACLES"

A new group is forming to study A Course In Miracles™ in the New Haven area.

The "Miracles Mondays" group's start date is February 24th, and will meet every Monday at the New Haven Gay & Lesbian Community Center, 7:30pm - 9:00pm.

Anyone interested in joining the group should contact Casey Roberts at (203) 230-2050 or Rev. Alexander R. Garbera at (203) 937-8085. Community Center members will be eligible for a 20% discount on the text books through the Interfaith Action Ministry. Serious students of the course and newcomers are all welcome and will benefit from the group.

A long-time student of A Course In Miracles, Rev. Alexander Garbera said that "even though I have been through the text and workbook several times, there is always something new to learn and experience through it. It is an unfolding process, and has been an instrumental part of my own healing journey." Rev. Garbera is an Interfaith Minister and graduated from The New Seminary. Ms. Casey Roberts is also currently enrolled in The New Seminary, and has been studying the course for seven years. Ms. Roberts said, "The Course continues to be an integral tool through which I open my mind and heart to the presence of peace and love that abides in each moment. I welcome the opportunity to learn new insights with people when we come together at Miracles Mondays." There are no dues or fees for membership for the Miracles Mondays group. The group is self-supporting by donations.

For information, contact Ms. Casey Roberts, (203) 230-2050 or Rev. Alexander R. Garbera, (203) 937-8085.

CASABLANCA OPENS, CLOSES

Last month we reported the opening of a new gay/lesbian club, the Casablanca, in South Norwalk. The day after we went to press, we learned the club had closed abruptly.

A REMINDER FOR DANBURY MEN

The Gay Men's Association of Danbury meets every Thursday night, 7:00pm at St. James Church, 25 West Street, downtown Danbury. For info call 203-778-7016.

SALT OF THE INTERNET

The Social Action Leadership Team of the Metropolitan Community Church of New Haven has announced their new home page, saying "It's just not the same old SALT!" The URL address is <http://members.aol.com/MCCSALT/>.

POSITIVE LIFESTYLES

HIV RELATED DEATHS: THE COMMON CAUSE.

©1997 Rev. Alexander R. Garbera, MA, MSC, ND, DD

As I wrote in previous articles, I am often perplexed and baffled by the Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV) and through the years something always told me that a working model of HIV had to be simple, inclusive, and without exceptions. I needed a working model that would cover all the people I have known who died horrible deaths, as well as those who continue to do very well despite the odds.

Most of the HIV models that I am vaguely familiar with focus on genetics, germs, and biochemistry. It is truly amazing how far we have come along in our search. These points of view, however, were much too complicated and microscopic for me to understand, and they didn't always pan out in real life experiences. The model that I needed had to be simpler and viewed from a higher perspective, one that included environmental, psycho-social, nutritional, and transpersonal factors.

I am a firm believer in miracles. I also believe in angels. I do not have and scientific data to support the following proposed model, and probably the best thing I can say is that it was built over years of personal observations and study of people living with, and who have died of, HIV/AIDS. It is a model that comes from living with the virus for over 11 years, and finding out what does and doesn't work for me.

The following model covers all that I have seen and experienced so far. For many of you, this model will not be anything new (Temoshok, L., O'Leary, A., Jenkins, S., Henry, M., Survival Time in Men with AIDS: Relationships with Psychological Coping and Autonomic Arousal. VIth International Conference on AIDS, San Francisco, CA 1990.) but I think it has important implications for future research, treatment, and successful strategies to live well with HIV/AIDS.

If I may be so bold to say then, in my opinion, that the leading cause of death of people with HIV/AIDS is stress.

Using the Hans Selye stress model, we know that prolonged stress results in visceral breakdown and even death. We know that HIV stresses the immune system and the body responds by increasing its metabolism and defenses. We also know that cofactors (bacteria, viruses, parasites) also add stress, as well as life style habits, nutritional, and environmental factors.

"OK, Rev. Garbera," you might be thinking "tell us something we don't know." I'm not sure I really can, except that I think we need to move to a more unified theory of HIV disease progression and one that accounts for all these variables.

The best I can offer right now is that we might consider some of the implications of this model for research, treatment, and life-style adjustments.

RESEARCH & TREATMENT

As a long term survivor and one that has participated in many cutting edge therapies, I have to say that the cure should not be worse than the cause. Take, for instance, the GP160 HIV vaccine (GP160) and most recently the TP5 immune support trials. They required subcutaneous injections of fluid under the skin, and I am sorry (call me a whiner) but they were more like medieval torture than therapy. They reminded me of the classic experiment of "Conditioned Helplessness" where dogs were bound up and given intermittent shocks, resulting in behavioral and physiological dysfunction, and even death.

A successful HIV therapy should not add stress to the body, either to it's other systems (especially the digestive, immune, and circulatory systems) or to the person (i.e. ease of use).

I would also like to see more research that includes life-style variables. Take, for example, a hypothetical vaccine trial. Is the data from one person who is taking good care of his or herself equally valid from a person who is out and about abusing his or her body with stimulants (i.e. caffeine, nicotine,...) other drugs and alcohol and/or promiscuous sex, safe or otherwise? (I do not wish to make any more judgments on sexual conduct, including promiscuity. I know from personal experience that sexual encounters, no matter how "safe" still open one to a host of other germs and stresses. Remember the old song "What do you get when you fall in love... enough germs to catch pneumonia...?" I am an established believer in the healing power of Love. My point here is to say choose wisely and not to over do it.) Yet all of the pharmaceutical studies that I have been in didn't question any of these things. One would hope that with a random sample of a large enough population, these variables would normalize themselves... but I am afraid I haven't seen any studies with adequate sampling controls or representative populations.

I am particularly interested in finding out more about how stress effects the body. I just started reading about how an excess of cortisol (a hormone that is released in the response to stress) increases catabolism (protein breakdown in muscles). I'd like to see some quality research on ways to limit muscular catabolism and cellular hydration (cell volumizing).

LIFE STYLE ADJUSTMENTS

I have noticed that the people who died of HIV/AIDS, regardless of the reason (i.e. PCP, PML, ...) all look the same when they are dead. They are very wasted. Wasting syndrome begins long before actual physical appearances are noticed, including changes in body fat ratios, etc. This also fits into the classic stress model. Successful survival strategies must include stress reduction and management, as well as nutritional interventions to compensate for metabolic changes.

NEWS & VIEWS

Let's face it: we need stress to survive. The only way we can totally avoid stress is when we are dead (which may be why I have heard death described as the final healing.) Stress can make us stronger. Even positive changes cause us stress, (i.e. new job, new love, ...) so the object is not to eliminate stress and stressors (the things that cause us stress) but to cut down as much as we can. This may mean eliminating unhealthy stressors where possible, or making what changes we can to minimize these effects on ourselves.

What may be stressful for one person may not be for another. I have heard it said that psychological stress is not so much the event itself, but the person's perception of that event. Since the human brain can not distinguish reality from a thought (since the thought is the only representation of reality it has) sometimes it is helpful to change our understanding, perception, of the event to reduce the stress it has on us. Interestingly enough, according to the A Course In Miracles™, a miracle itself is a shift in perception.

In today's modern world, we are bombarded with pathogens, pollutants, and pests (little ones as well as ones with college degrees). Living with HIV/AIDS, it almost seems that you can't win, which oddly enough, also fits into the stress model (i.e., conditioned helplessness). That's why I prefer to use a transpersonal perspective, and believe in a power greater than myself to lead me along the way. This gives me a sense of peace, it also gives me joy (great stress busters), it also helps me to get a better perspective on what I do have control over, and what I do not. Most important, I have to remember I always have choices.

Exercise is another way to relieve stress. Unless, of course, you become obsessed about it which can be stressful in itself. There are also nutritional ways to minimize stress on your digestive system and fortify your immune system. We still need more data and quality information in this area. But a most unfortunate and deadly consequence of today's economy is, there are few incentives to put lots of money into research on low-cost, effective, natural substances. Perhaps the companies that make or promote these items will, but once again, I have to question the validity and reliability of these findings. This is also very stressful for me.

In conclusion I'd have to say that the stress model seems to work for this simple minded Minister. This is not to discount the importance of medical diagnoses, or current HIV treatments. This guiding model just places HIV under the umbrella of a host of cofactors that can seriously impact the immune system and effect survival. If, however, HIV does take me down, you can confidently say that it wasn't HIV, or whatever reason they may put on my death certificate, but it that it was stress.

Now, if I can only practice what I preach, I will be in real good shape for a long time. That's the hard part. Peace, Love, & Healing.

About the Author: Rev. Alexander R. Garbera earned a Master's degree in Psychology from SUNY at Stony Brook. Since testing HIV positive over 11 years ago, Rev Garbera was ordained as an Interfaith minister from Manhattan's New Seminary. He is currently assisting AIDS Project New Haven in creating wellness programs to help PLWHA's to empower their lives, reduce stress, survive and thrive with HIV/AIDS.

Comments or suggestions to Rev. Garbera can be addressed to Pozangel@aol.com.

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40-Up Club. (Social Grp.-call Dale before 10pm)	(203) 261-4019
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Gay Mens Association of Danbury	(203) 778-7016
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The Loft, White Plains NY,	(914) 948-4922
Triangle Bowling League	(203) 931-8789
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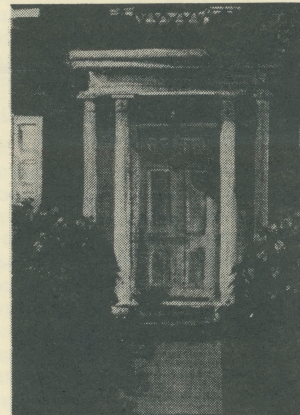
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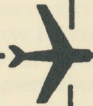
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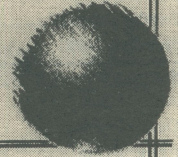
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Calendar

March, 1997

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Feb 23 AA 9-10 am OutSpoken 4-6	24 Women's Rap 7:30	25	26 Bi Rap Grp 7:30 TCC Board 7:30	27 Men's Rap 7:30	28 Bowling 8:30 Circle Lanes	Mar 1 Center Stage '97 Benefit Bread&Roses Bridgeport 8pm
2 AA 9-10 am OutSpoken 4-6 Sunday at Center Bloodroot wc&j	3 Women's Rap 7:30	4 Lesbian Lit Grp 7:30	5 P-FLAG 7:45	6 Men's Rap 7:30 Oral History 7:30	7 40+ Women 7-9 Bowling 8:30 Circle Lanes	8 Friendraiser Peter & Joe's 7-9 N&V deadline
9 AA 9-10 am OutSpoken 4-6 Bloodroot potluck	10 Women's Rap 7:30	11	12 Bi Rap Grp 7:30 TCC Board 7:30	13 Men's Rap 7:30	14 Out & About 6:30-8 Bowling 8:30 Circle Lanes	15
16 AA 9-10 am OutSpoken 4-6 Bloodroot wc&j	17 Women's Rap 7:30 St Pat's Day	18 Fundraising/Spec Events Comm 7:30	19 Pol Action Grp 7:30	20 Mens' Rap 7:30 P-FLAG Spouses & Ex-spouses 7:30	21 40+ Women 7-9 Bowling 8:30 Circle Lanes Childn shadows conf	22 Gay Men's Chorus "Out!" - Shubert, New Haven 8pm Childn shadows conf
23 AA 9-10 am OutSpoken 4-6 Gay Men's Chorus "Out!" Shubert, 2pm Bloodroot potluck	24 Women's Rap 7:30	25 TCC Forum 7:30 So you can't wait to get married?	26 Bi Rap Grp 7:30 TCC Board 7:30	27 Men's Rap 7:30	28 Bowling 8:30 Circle Lanes Good Friday	29 Gay Men's Chorus "Out!" - Shubert, New Haven 8pm
30 AA 9-10 am OutSpoken 4-6 Easter Sunday Bloodroot bw&c&j	31 Women's Rap 7:30	Apr 1 Lesbian Lit Grp 7:30	2 P-FLAG 7:45	3 Men's Rap 7:30 Oral History 7:30	4 Bowling 8:30 Circle Lanes	5 Business expo NYC

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Connecticut Business Guild - 225-6464

40+ Womens Group - Judy 227-5566

Free Association of Fairfield County - John 268-8858 x304

Gay Men's Rap Group - Dave 838-1881; John 926-8971

Gmosaic (People of Color) - not currently active call TCC 853-0600

Lesbian Literature Reading Group - Michele, 316-0333

Out & About (Gen.X Group) - Jen 736-6417 or Dan 838-2367

OutSpoken (Youth) - Barb 259-8171; Dan 227-1755;

Doug 838-2367

Political Action Group - Michele, 438-4465; Charlie, 226-8652

P-FLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians & Gays) -

Joan 544-8724; Lester 322-5380; Belinda 855-1203

P-FLAG Spouses & Ex Spouses Group - Joan 544-8724

Triangle Bowling League (Circle Lanes, Fairfield) - Lisa 333-3113; Roseann 931-8789

Women's Rap Group - Debi 933-5103; Linda 866-4598;

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