

LESBIAN PRIDE NEWSLETTER

GOOD NEWS, POSITIVE REMINDERS AND INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGES
BY, FOR AND ABOUT LESBIANS

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Good News for Domestic Partners

News Media Companies Embracing Benefits

Washington, DC — The number of news media companies and associated unions offering domestic partner (DP) benefits has more than doubled (from 26 to 57) since 1997, according to the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association (NLGJA). Nearly six times as many media employers offer DP benefits as did in 1994, when NLGJA first researched the scope of domestic partner benefits in the industry.

These were the key findings announced recently, and contained in a new directory produced by the NLGJA which tracks the immense growth in the number of news media employers that offer benefits to the domestic partners of employees – comparable to those offered to legally married spouses.

Since 1997, for example, the NLGJA has applauded the decisions by such leaders as the Times Mirror Company, the Washington Post Company and most recently by Cox Enterprises, which publishes the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, for their decisions to treat lesbian and gay journalists equally with other employees. The new report also reveals that, in nearly every instance when companies were asked about the cost impact of DP benefits, NLGJA was informed the costs were negligible or that the company did not find it necessary to track the number – suggesting minimal financial impact.

"Equal pay for equal work – that's the principle behind domestic partner benefits. Offering these benefits is a smart, competitive business decision, and recognition for all gay and lesbian employees that they are fully and equally valued in their workplaces. Companies that don't yet offer DP benefits are quickly falling behind," said NLGJA national board member and San Francisco reporter for the International Medical News Group Sherry Boschert, author of the directory. "The good yet ironic news is that our directory will soon be out-of-date."
– NLGJA

Airlines Take Historic Steps

Fort Lauderdale, FL — Gay travel industry leaders are cheering the trail-blazing announcements made recently by United Airlines, American Airlines and US Airways. All three airlines have decided to offer domestic partner benefits to their gay and lesbian employees worldwide. By the way, all three carriers are members of the respected International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association (IGLTA).

Examples of the employee benefits that will be available to same-sex couples that were previously available only to married couples include health and dental coverage, pension survivor rights, and travel benefits, among others.

"United Airlines and American Airlines, along with US Airways, together send a powerful message to our entire industry," said Aaron Kampfe, President of IGLTA. "They have voted to recognize all their employees with full respect and equal benefits. IGLTA has always championed tearing down the walls of discrimination while creating a safe, welcoming and pleasurable travel experience for all gays and lesbians. We are proud to work with these companies and to use their example to encourage others. There's no limit to what we can achieve together."

The three carriers are responsible for over 250,000 airline employees worldwide who will be covered by the improved benefits program next year when they are fully implemented. All three airlines join a strong trend in corporate America where employers are increasingly offering domestic partner benefits to gay and lesbian employees. Over all, more than 2,800 US employers currently offer domestic partner benefits, according to observers.
– IGLTA

*What does your company have going for it...and you?
Write and tell us, and let us share whatever good news
you may have.*

♀♂ October Affirmations

Wonder and beauty are all around me every day of the year.

*I rejoice in the change of the seasons and all of the wonder
and beauty that every new season brings*

Send us your favorite affirmations and we'll share them with everyone.

I heal myself as I forgive others

Making a response to the injustice I have experienced demands great strength from within my being. If those who hurt me asked for my forgiveness and admitted how they have wronged me, it might be easier, but such repentance is rare. Whether my pain is related to my same-sex loving or some other aspect of my life, I have been deeply hurt.

Today I look at those in my life I am being called upon to forgive. Forgiveness is what I need to do for myself, not the offender. The offender is not absolved of responsibility for what was done, whether or not I forgive, and my forgiveness does not imply that what happened was acceptable. When I forgive, I let go of the hate in my heart, and that process cleanses my soul, allowing me to get on with my life. The chains of the offender's power over me are broken, and new health and purity grow within me.

I am ready to embark on a challenging and long journey. I love myself enough to do it. Let my self-healing forgiveness begin!

— Eleanor Ruth Wagner in Lavender Reflections

Reminders:

*You are entitled to love yourself
just exactly as you are...right now!*

*When it gets hard,
remember to remind yourself that
it's okay to be different!*

*To be openly vulnerable
is an act of power...
to be openly empowered
is an act of vulnerability!*

Robin Posin from *Rememberings and Celebrations*,
a 64-card deck of
Loving Reminders of the Great Mother's Voice

Savvy Sapphic Suggestions
for Successful Lesbian Living

Dear Savvy Sappho,

I fancy myself to be an outdoors woman. My sweetie is not. What can I do to get her to love the great outdoors?
Signed, Paulette Bunyon

Dear Paulette,

You must remember that not all women are fans of flora and fauna. What may be wonderful for you may be boring for her. You could try taking her for short hikes in the woods to see if she will come to appreciate nature in all its glory, but if you are extolling the virtues of fresh air and she is asking you where the nearest mall is, you may have a problem you can't overcome. Every now and then you might want to compromise with tickets to the theater and a stay at a local hotel if camping under the stars is not her cup of tea.
- SS

Dear Savvy Sappho,

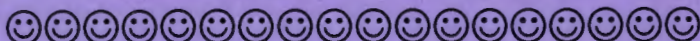
Our bowling league carpools. As luck would have it, the team captain owns a van. She is a rotten driver. There are six posterior imprints in the bench seats from harrowing traffic experiences. What can we do and not hurt her feelings?
Signed, Back Seat Survivor

Dear Survivor,

Take separate cars. Do not put your safety in jeopardy to save a few bucks in gas. The team could chip in and get her driving lessons for Christmas, or ask her if everyone could take turns driving her van. If you confront her openly, do not do it while you are in the van and she is driving.
- SS

This month's Savvy Sapphic Suggestions
by Stacy Chandler © 1999 Stacy Chandler

If you have questions
that need some savvy Sapphic suggestions,
send them along to Savvy Sappho,
% Makaw, PO Box 5812, Denver, CO 80217



POETRY AND MORE BY

ANNE WILSON



TWA Flight 142

**Over the rugged
moon-map of mountains,
dazzling sun
on scattered villages
reflects, like sprinkled
broken glass
and lakes,
like flattened puddles,
appear to have
a thin,
silver skin-like membrane.
This is how it looks to me
20,000 feet up in the sky.**

**Later, I thought to myself
while descending toward clouds
spun into think, gauzy
cotton-candy mists,
I can only take
this aerial perspective
for a limited time
before
wanting to plummet
down into your embrace
like a bird
dropped suddenly from sky.**

**Into your furred, feathered warmth
where the pungent taste
of earth's magnetic resonance
deep within you
chases my dream images
into sleep.**

**I bring you this,
my aerial vision,
like a twig
of winter's raging green,
like a broken-off piece
of clear blue sky.**

© Anne Wilson, 1997
from Beloved Muse

On the Bright Side
A Collection of Selected Columns
by Marilda Mel White

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by Eleanor Ruth Wagner

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(More) How to Find a Practitioner

When looking for an alternative health care provider, the best place to start is with a national professional organization. Most will provide information about the technique and a list of practitioners in your area.

HYPNOTHERAPY: American Board of Hypnotherapy, 1-800-634-9766 www.aih.cc

MASSAGE: American Massage Therapy Association, 847-864-0123

MEDITATION:

American Oriental Bodywork Therapy Association, 1-609-782-1616 www.healthy.net/aobta

Transcendental Meditation, 1-888-532-7686 (rings through to a TM teacher in your area) www.tm.org

NATUROPATHY:

American Association of Naturopathic Physicians, 206-298-0125 www.naturopathic.org

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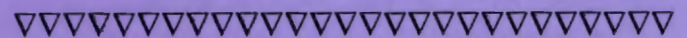
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Traditional Chinese Medicine (National Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Alliance, 609-782-1616 www.healthy.net/aobta



Do You Know About...?

Fat Fest '99

Fat Fest '99, a Conference for Women of Substance, will be held Nov. 12-14 at the Best Western Executive Inn in Tacoma, Washington. The conference activities will include empowering workshops, inspiring speakers, a hot 'n sassy fashion show, shopping ('til you're dropping) with vendors and craftswomen, a look-alike contest, indoor (and private) heated pools and spas, a clothing swap, and of course, meals and old and new friends.

The goal of the Fest is to bring together fat women (and female allies and friends) of different ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations and various degrees of self-acceptance to inspiration and mutual support. For information, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Fat Fest '99, %508 North 103rd, Seattle, WA 98133, or e-mail to fatfest99@aol.com

Blowing Bubbles

by Marilda Mel White

My various businesses take me all over the Denver metro area these days, and somehow I often seem to find myself far away from home in rush hour traffic. And if I had to pick my least favorite part of any business, having to drive all over everywhere in traffic would be it.

Shortly after moving to Denver in 1986, I was riding with a new friend one day on I-25 around five o'clock near downtown, and she was grousing about us being in rush hour traffic. I laughed out loud. True, we had had to slow to 40 miles an hour but to me, based on my former experiences, that meant we weren't in any kind of significant traffic at all. You see, where I had come from – Marin County north of San Francisco – rush hour traffic meant long and frequent stops on the freeway, interrupted only by sporadically making headway measured in inches at a time.

Back there, I lived about 30 miles from my work, which was considered a short commute for Californians. Fortunately I had an odd work week (I worked some late hours and often on weekends), and I could pretty much come and go as I pleased, which meant I could usually miss rush hour traffic. If there was some reason I couldn't avoid rush hour, either in the morning or the afternoon, it meant my usual 35-minute trip could take up to an hour and a half. If it hadn't been such pretty country, and if I hadn't been on a motorcycle most of the time, I would have hated that commute much sooner than I did.

So when I moved to Colorado, I knew what real rush hour traffic was, and what I experienced in Denver in the late 80's was nothin' compared to that. Now, however, all that has changed since a good portion of the California population has moved to Denver to clog up the roads. Nowadays, those of us who drive anywhere in the metro area know what real rush hour traffic is too (and no, I still don't know why they call it "rush" hour when it's the

slowest drive of the day).

I was glad to move out of central Denver five years ago to the 'burbs, where I also worked and where I could drive to almost everywhere I needed to go without having to bother with stop lights. I've been spoiled the last few years by living and working in a town where traffic is hardly ever a problem.

But my life has changed now and I'm back in traffic – and I know some of you are still in it much more often than I am. If you're looking for a way to make it better, let me share with you the following:

I was in one of the trains at DIA one day when I heard a woman talking about someone who lives in the Bay Area. From what she said, traffic is even worse back there now than it used to be (even though I thought most of those drivers were here by now!), and her friend found a perfect solution. This friend, a woman I'd like to meet some day because I like the way she thinks, keeps a bottle of children's bubbles in her car, and when traffic gets tight and other drivers get tense and crabby, she blows bubbles out her car window.

I thought that was such a wonderful idea that I recently bought myself a bottle of bubbles for traffic situations. It works! If you don't believe me, try it for yourself. Next time you're in traffic, instead of fuming and honking and making gestures to other drivers, just send those pretty, frail, colorful, floating bubbles out through your window and watch for smiles.

Thanks to a chance meeting in the airport with the woman who told the story, I got another valuable reminder that even though there are some things in life we can't change – like traffic – how we choose to handle those things is up to us. I've decided to choose blowing bubbles over shouting curses or beating on my steering wheel, and I'm passing the idea on to you in hopes that I see more bubbles coming from other cars in the future.

My lover asked me if I wanted to have children. I told her I didn't know, but we should keep trying. – Suzy Berger

Even sodomy can be sane and wholesome granted there is an exchange of genuine feeling. – D.H. Lawrence

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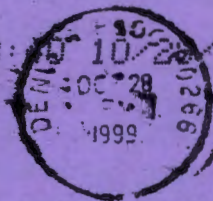
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