

N E T W O R K N O R T H G

Property of
HERLAND LIBRARY

Property of
HERLAND LIBRARY

VOLUME 11 • ISSUE 2 • MARCH • APRIL • 1997

NORTHERN MICHIGAN HELP AND INFORMATION LINE INSTALLED

PFLAG, GLSTN, Friends North and THIRLevel corporations announce a new, toll-free Help and Information Line.

by M'Lynn Hartwell

Traverse City—PFLAG, GLSTN, Friends North and THIRLevel corporations announce a new Help and Information Line to address individual and family concerns about same-gender affectional orientation through information, counseling and intervention. Trained THIRLevel crisis staff will respond immediately to help individuals and families cope with the difficulties they encounter as the result of bias in our schools, family, church and community.

The U.S. Department of Justice reported that "The most frequent victims of hate violence today are blacks, Hispanics, Southeast Asians, Jews, and gays and lesbians. Homosexuals are probably the most frequent victims."

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force surveyed 2,000 gays and lesbians and found that over 90% had experienced some form of victimization on account of their perceived or actual sexual orientation and one-in-five gay males and one-in-ten lesbians said that they had been "punched, hit, kicked, or beaten." Ninety-seven percent of high-school kids report regularly hearing some homophobic remark; 28 percent of gay and lesbian students dropped out of school.

Researchers have found that homosexual youth are at a greater risk to experience isolation, peer and family rejection, harassment and violence. They expend considerable energy hiding their "secret" from friends and family, out of fear of rejection — rejection that often results in being thrown out of the home and onto the streets. The threat of physical and psychological damage to the developing gay teen is great, and our Help and Information Line may be of great value to all members of the family as they seek understanding. The Help and Information Line will also assist people of all ages with lesbian or gay parents, or other family. It is estimated that as many as fourteen million children come from households with lesbian or gay parents.

Given the generally accepted statistics regarding the proportion of gays in society, every city, town and rural community in America is likely to have a significant number of lesbian and gay students, teachers, parents and other people involved in every area of their community. In fact, in northern Michigan the lesbian, gay, bisexual and

transgender population is likely to be our largest minority group.

Learning tolerance and respect for diversity can help free our community of prejudice and bigotry, and help reduce violence. Our goal is to create northern Michigan communities where all individuals are valued and respected.

The Help and Information Line telephone number in Traverse City: 616 / 946-1804

If outside of Traverse City you may call: 800 / 579-8769

Information About Organizations:

Friends North, Inc. is a regional social organization with over 600 members. Friends North offers numerous events and activities throughout the year for individuals who are lesbians, gay men, or bisexual.

GLSTN: Gay Lesbian Straight Teachers Network, strives to assure that each member of every school community is valued and respected, regardless of sexual orientation. Through community organizing, public

Help Line (continued page 3)

FRIENDS NORTH UPCOMING EVENTS

HIGH TEA

Traverse City Opera House - Sunday, April 27, 1997

GAY PROM

May, 1997 - (Date and Location to be announced)

TRAVERSE CITY PRIDE EVENT

June 29, 1997

FRIENDS NORTH BIKE TOUR

August 8-10

AUTUMN HIKE

(Exact Date/Location to be announced)

FALL FILM FESTIVAL

(Exact Date/Location to be announced)

GAY HISTORY AND EDUCATION DAY - OCTOBER, 1997

(Exact Date/Location to be announced)

THANKSGIVING POTLUCK - NOVEMBER, 1997

(Exact Date/Location to be announced)



FROM THE EDITOR

Politically, our new year has gotten off to a mildly disappointing start.

Many of us wished Bill back in the White House for another term, and then, he must have forgotten how much we supported him. He never once used either the "g" or the "l" words in his State of the Union address. However, when the Employment Non-Discrimination Act gets reintroduced this year, Bill has publicly vowed to give it his whole-hearted assistance.

On the other side of this presidential administration, Vice President Gore has expressed an interest in educating himself about gays and lesbians and recently asked gay leaders for advice on which books to read. A few were suggested: Before Stonewall, Randy Shilts' Conduct Unbecoming, and The Celluloid Closet.

Individual states have been busy building barriers to stop the homosexual marriage menace that will soon invade the mainland from Hawaii. To date, almost half the states have passed laws that prohibit the recognition of same-sex marriage, despite the fact that marriage has yet to be legalized in any state. Hawaii is still wrestling with the issue, but same sex marriage should be recognized there sometime in 1998.

Many members of Congress are busying themselves with at least two unnecessary and self-aggrandizing amendments to our Constitution. One protects the American flag from being desecrated, and the other calls for a mandatory balanced federal budget. I worry that our Constitution can be tampered with too easily if these move forward. It is then just another step away from their proposing to outlaw same-sex marriage via another amendment... or who knows what!

Locally, I hope that at least a few people rose early enough to watch the two-day Rita Melotti (TV 29) show that focused on same-sex marriage. Thanks to Guy Molnar, Cindy Robb, Rev. Emenheiser from Grace Episcopal, and Benjamin Maddy, the gay/lesbian community had excellent representation and interpretation.

The second day of the show, our state representative, Michelle McManus, was on the speaker phone during the half hour program. She defended her support of Michigan's banning same-sex marriage, and attempted to rationalize how her stand against gay marriage was also a stand for equal rights for everyone.

Without a hint of sarcasm, McManus proclaimed, "I feel that Michigan's banning gay marriage is not discriminatory towards gay men, because heterosexual men are also not allowed to marry." I have paraphrased, as it was done in typical 'Michelle-speak.' It is opinions such as this that have earned her a seat on Engler's Michigan's Civil Rights Commission. Now she has been officially charged to do for all other minority groups what she has done for gays and lesbians.

We are still looking for contributions, so please consider submitting your essay or thoughts for our upcoming issues this year. If you have any questions, please call me. Our newsletter will be much better with YOU in it!

Richard Tuxbury

Friends North, Inc., P.O. Box 562, Traverse City, MI 49685-0562 (616) 946-1804 (This is a general information line to receive F/N information.)

FRIENDS NORTH is an organization of lesbians, gay men, bi-sexuals 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 at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Brenda Bartz - 616-946-2708/bbartzstar@aol.com
 Victor Dinsmore, Secretary - 616-459-5759/itsyrigloo@aol.com
 M'Lynn Hartwell - 616-943-8800/les n more@aol.com
 Jim Ingleson - 616-922-0925
 Carol Lambertson, Pres. - 616-275-7102/tclambo@gtii.com
 Tom Kincaid—VP - 616-947-4647
 Ben Maddy - 616-271-3926/coolj707@aol.com
 Julie Parker - 616-276-9330
 Sue Schwartz, Treas. - 616-946-3032/tcfriend@aol.com

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE: Publication of *Networking 45° North*.

Editor: Richard Tuxbury: 271-3042
 or e-mail: tux001@aol.com

Publishing & Layout: Richard Curtis: 616-929-9605
 or e-mail: rlc@traverse.com

Advertising: Ric Nelson: 616-933-7116
 Mailing List: John Evans: 922-0746

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 271-3042 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 \$120.00 for 6 issues. Inserts and larger sized ads are available. Please call 'advertising' for rates.

SPONSORING POLITICAL POSTCARDS: Cost for printing 2,800 postcards for *Networking 45° North* is \$100.00. To sponsor all or part of this, and to give your input, call Richard 271-3042.

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: Issue #3, April 15. Issue #4 June 15, Issue #5 August 15.

ADDRESS CHANGES: Please notify us in advance if a change is coming. Call John Evans, 922-0746, or send changes to our address.

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.

DISTRIBUTION: *Networking* is published 6 times per year. Copies are sent bulk-mail in a plain envelope to approximately 700 households. Additional copies are available at select local establishments. Our mailing list is not sold or traded with other organizations.



printed on recycled paper



FROM THE PRESIDENT

I have had many people talk to me about "what it used to be like" in the Grand Traverse area with respect to the gay community. Gatherings used to happen only within the safety of people's homes. Then some folks got brave and organized dances, first hanging brown paper on all the windows of the rented building for protection from the public eye. And who can forget those dark and smokey Den dances?

However, times have changed in our area, albeit slowly. The Den dances have disappeared, but Traverse City has a gay bar that has survived. We have a monthly lesbian coffeehouse that has existed for over three years. There is an expansive and labeled Gay/Lesbian section in our newest bookstore. Last year the Bay Theater set aside a Sunday afternoon for a movie to benefit Friends North, and gay issues even get mentioned in the local press occasionally; though the issues are not always positive — at least we're not ignored.

In fact, I took a few minutes to quickly list as many of the gay or gay-friendly people, places and things I could think of, and came up with quite a slate: Networking 45 Degrees North - our excellent newsletter; Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse; Weekly Gay AA Meetings; The Rap Group - monthly gay discussion group; The Bookie Joint; The Petoskey Thursday night dinner group (weekly); PFLAG monthly meetings; GLSTN meetings; Lesbian Adventures - bi-monthly gatherings; Monthly Friends North Board Meetings; Wellness Network; Monthly Out 'n About Coffeehouse Planning Meetings; Gay Book Discussion Group at Border's Book Store - Monthly; Gay Pride Celebration Planning Meetings; Newsletter Stuffing Party.

(NOTE: Details regarding most of the above can be found elsewhere within this newsletter)

This is by no means an all-inclusive list, but I think you get the idea that if you are looking to either get involved or just meet other like-minded people, you don't have to know the secret handshake. There are plenty of opportunities.

Some of the above mentioned groups or activities are part of Friends North and some are not. However, we attempt to cooperate with one another when planning our various events. Therefore, on January 5th, 1997 the Friends North Board met with representatives from some of the above groups in a "retreat" setting to discuss common issues and concerns. The Board asked for input and entertained requests and ideas. During the latter half of the day, with all guests having departed, the Board then sketched out the yearly event calendar.

Since we are awaiting confirmation of several locations and dates, information is incomplete at this time. However, we have placed the Calendar of Events in this issue in case you are inspired with ideas or suggestions. We welcome your input and still have lots of planning time for most of the events - just call the help line, leave your name and number, and we will call you back.

We will be updating the calendar with each newsletter issue.

FRIENDS NORTH BIKE TOUR, AUGUST 8-10

Join us for a spectacular weekend of biking and socializing in beautiful Leelanau County. Call Friends North for an information packet."

Help Line (continued from page 1)

advocacy and in-school programming, we are working to end homophobia and heterosexism in this generation through educating today's students. We welcome as members any and all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation or occupation, who are committed to seeing this philosophy realized.

PFLAG: Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays promote the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered persons, their families and friends through

- Support to cope within an adverse society.
- Education to enlighten an ill-informed public, and
- Advocacy to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights.

THIRDlevel: Provides 24 hour crisis intervention, information and referral services; youth and family services; short term counseling; and support groups such as Windfire for lesbian and gay youth.

COMMON VOICES

Ed Richardson

Exciting things are happening in the Friends North Rap Group. Please delete "Rap Group" from you brain data base and replace with our brand new name — "Common Voices." I would like to thank Alan Williams for suggesting this more reflective name. Alan has also volunteered to do promotion for our group that welcomes ALL gays and lesbians—regardless of age—to our monthly gatherings held in the basement lounge at Grace Episcopal Church, 349 Washington St. at 7:30 pm on the second Wednesday.

As always, Common Voices offers a safe haven and supportive atmosphere. Often, there are selected topics and related videos but there is always time to consider personal problems. Common Voices has no difficulty being a sounding board. If you are new to our local gay/lesbian community, Common Voices wants to welcome you! If you have not been to a Common Voices gathering for some time, please come back. You are missed! If you know of someone who needs Common Voices, please encourage them to come. Our welcome mat is always out — don't knock, just walk-in!

Common Voices will also be gathering for dinner at a local selected restaurant on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm. We want you to join us! Please contact myself (Ed) at 947-4697 or Tom at 275-6127 for the restaurant choice of the month (or for any questions about Common Voices.) (There was discussion at the January Common Voices gathering that the monthly restaurant outing be entitled "Common Nibbles" — what do you think???)

Jim Frees

Plant Haus

(616) 941-8868

Fax (616) 941-9063

♦ Hrs 9am-7pm Daily ♦ Out of town phone 800-876-8868
1081 S. Airport Road West, Traverse City, MI 49686 (Colonial Square)



Out 'n About A Lesbian Coffeehouse

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

The Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse is very pleased to present to our lesbian community the passionate, percussive rhythms and powerful vocals of **Irene Farrera**. Her music is inspired by the rich culture of the South American continent, where she was born and raised in Venezuela. She has been performing professionally for



Irene Farrera

more than 15 years. Irene's repertoire includes the contemporary sounds of Brazil and the Caribbean. She composes beautiful songs with lyrics in Spanish, English, and Portuguese. She also interprets songs by well-known Latin American composers. Her work reflects the essence of the Latin spirit, offering fierce passion, romantic tenderness, and diverse experience.

Irene Farrera will be on the Coffeehouse stage on Saturday, March 15. The Coffeehouse is open from 7:00 p.m. until 11 p.m. Please show your support of a wonderful performer and the Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse with your attendance.

In April, the Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse is planning a "Favorite Card and Board Games" evening. Please bring your decks of unmarked cards for a spur-of-the-moment friendly Euchre match or a challenging Gin rummy tournament. Also bring any of the myriad varieties of board games (i.e., Monopoly, Clue, Shoots and Ladders, Yahtzee, (Lesbian-modified Mystery Date, Trivial Pursuit, Pictionary, etc.) to the Coffeehouse. It is all happening on Saturday, April 19, from 7 p.m. until 11 p.m. Prizes awarded to the individual who is selected by the entire group as the lesbian who best fit the category, "Plays well with others."

Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse is managed by an informal gathering of lesbians who are dubbed the "Steering Committee." This Committee meets for a few hours on the Monday prior to the 3rd Saturday coffeehouse for planning of each month's event. The Committee is always seeking input from you, the lesbian community, about what or who Out 'n About should feature in upcoming months. Please join the Steering Committee so that your ideas can be heard and so that you can make a positive impact on your own community. Without your input and assistance the Coffeehouse will not succeed.

Out n' About Lesbian Coffeehouse is held on the third Saturday of each month except August and 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.

For more information, or to have your name placed on the Out 'n About Lesbian Coffeehouse mailing list, call Brenda at 946-2708—leave message.

BOARD NOTES:

In an attempt to maintain good communication among the Friends North Board of Directors, the membership and the readers of this newsletter, we are adding this section to provide you with a synopsis of what really happens at our board meetings.

We welcome feedback in the form of phone calls, letters to the editor and attendance at the board meetings. Please let us know if this information is helpful to you!

On January 7th the Board met for it's first monthly meeting of 1997. The major points of business for that meeting included:

- Review of our financial report - an excellent job was done by incoming treasurer, Sue Schwartz. It is summarized below:

Opening Balance as of 12/1/96	=	\$ 3290.19
Total Revenue	=	\$ 285.00
Total Expenses	=	\$ 562.12
Closing Balance as of 12/31/96	=	\$ 3013.07

- There was discussion about the ensuing toll-free telephone number which will be answered for Friends North, PFLAG and GLSTN at Thirdlevel Crisis Intervention. The Thirdlevel staff will be 'inserviced' by representatives of Friends North, PFLAG and GLSTN. A contract will need to be signed, and then service can begin. Anticipated date is February 10, 1997. (See related article in this issue).
- We appointed the newsletter editor and publisher. This has to be done at the beginning of each year and thankfully the same people — Dick Tuxbury and Richard Curtis — accepted these positions.
- A policy/procedure was approved, along with an application form for the Friends North Scholarship fund (formerly known as the Community Needs Fund). These items are available from our treasurer, Sue Schwartz, or any board member. A copy is located elsewhere in this newsletter.

BANKERS LIFE AND CASUALTY COMPANY

**A Trusted Name In Insurance
For Over 100 Years**

Long Term Care • Medicare Supplement
Income Replacement • Home Health Care
Annuity • Health • Life

814 S. Garfield Ave. Suite C
Traverse City, MI 49684
(616) 947-4390
S-5205

LINDA L. WIKLE
Agent

- An introductory letter was approved which will be sent to all people requesting information about Friends North along with the most current copy of the newsletter. In the past there was no consistency as to how this was done.
- Our bylaws call for the appointment of an Executive Committee consisting of the President, Vice President and one other board member. Victor Dinsmoore was appointed by the Board as this third member.
- Plans were finalized for mailing renewal letters to members with lapsed renewal dates. Approximately 300 renewal requests will be mailed. [Note: at this writing approximately 75 renewals have been received — thank you!!]. We also approved a special mailing of a flyer reminding folks of the Winter Sports Party on Feb. 23.
- There was general discussion about a request made to the board during the Board Retreat from a young person who is interested in establishing a Safe Schools program and a gay/straight alliance in the high school. The request was for money to assist with mailings, etc. Since no official business may be conducted at the Board Retreat, the item was placed on the agenda for our first meeting. Our by-laws state that to become a member of Friends North a person must be 18 years of age or older. Board consensus was that in order to provide financial assistance to someone, that someone must be a Friends North member. One board member offered to have a discussion with our attorney, Madeline Thomas, regarding this issue. This item was tabled until discussion with the attorney takes place.

Board business at the February meeting included:

- Financial report:

Opening Balance as of 1/1/97	=	\$ 3013.07
Total Revenue	=	\$ 1310.00
Total Expenses	=	\$ 490.53
Closing Balance as of 1/31/97	=	\$ 3732.54
- The president stated that a notebook of "policies and procedures" would be started. When a process is identified by the board that would be best passed on to a new board in writing, it will be written, submitted for board approval and filed in the notebook. There is no specific method presently in place for instructing incoming board members on the business details of Friends North.
- There was discussion on the results of the recent membership renewal mailing. Approximately 86 (out of 300+) renewal forms

have been received so far. There was lengthy discussion about what to do with names on the list of people who don't respond. Some board members feel that if people haven't renewed their membership then they should not receive a copy of the newsletter, since it costs about \$1 per issue. Others feel that everyone should stay on the mailing list regardless of whether or not they have paid a membership. We are carrying names from as far back as 1993. [The renewal date is on the mailing label right after the name]. Further discussion was tabled for future meetings to include the editor and publisher.

- The issue of membership in Friends North include persons under the age of 18 years was tabled as there has not been a complete response from the attorney.
- The updating and maintenance of the mailing list and database was discussed. General consensus was that while there is room for improvement in our current system, confidentiality must be maintained when considering updated software and the transference of the existing information. Further discussion was tabled pending additional information on existing database.
- New letterhead design was approved.

GAY & LESBIAN BOOK GROUP

Aimee/Sheila McRae/awesome@freeway.net

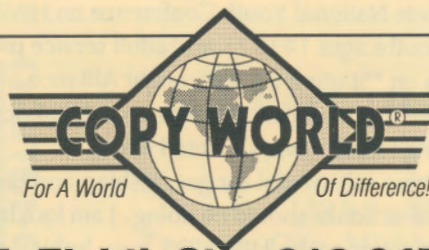
On the last Monday in March (the 31st to be exact) and every last Monday of every month thereafter, Aimee from Borders Books, Music, and Cafe, will be facilitating a Gay & Lesbian Literature and Studies Book Group. In March we'll discuss "And Say Hi to Joyce" by Deb Price and Joyce Murdoch. But even if Deb and Joyce aren't your cup of tea, please come on out and show your interest in the group so that we may all decide what to read next month, or even decide if we need two separate groups (one for gay lit, one for lesbian). Books chosen for discussion receive a 20% discount at Borders, and we try to just read paperbacks to keep the cost down and make the book group accessible to everyone.

HAIR FORCE ONE

801 West Front Street
Traverse City, MI 49684

For Appointment Call
941-8255

Mark Lizenby



502 E. Eighth St. • 616-947-1965
COPIES • PRINTING • SHIPPING • FAX

Joann Ewing • Brian Bensett • Richard Curtis

A DIVISION OF LASER PERFECT PLUS, INC.

Contributions

FROM THE COMMUNITY

NOTES, JOTTINGS AND NEWS FROM THE NORTH

by Greg R. Baird

Hello everyone! Since my last column in Jan-Feb, my life has been so busy with many wonderful happenings. I found it difficult to write about one topic this time around as I had so much to share. So I am mixing a pot of literary soup and pouring it out for everyone to take a taste.

My last column I had asked people to write me and tell me if they feel a sense of community in their area and where do they go to find it. I also had asked if they didn't have that community feeling to write me and possibly I could hook them up with a group. Well, the mail has been rolling in, but I'm always looking for more. I am going to use this information for a future article and also to guide some people in a positive direction.

*Some people who have responded from the U.P. tell me they have nothing to do, and that most people either go to a local straight bar to hang out or attend one of the occasional dances they have in Canada. Other folks meet for movies or potlucks and some inquired about the Gay dinner group in Petoskey. (Every Thursday at 7:00 pm at the Park Garden Cafe)

I had a lovely letter from a lesbian in Traverse City, telling me of how she finds it hard to meet people in the area. She is older and would love to find that sense of community and meet other mature lesbians. Going out for lunch and movies occasionally would be a lot of fun for her. Now I don't want to play matchmaker like in "Fiddler on the Roof", but I would like to direct this lady in the right direction. Any suggestions would be welcome.

I had the pleasure of meeting and working with Jeanne White-Ginder, mother of Ryan White, when she came to North Central Michigan College to give a lecture in October of 1996. She was impressed by my work in speaking out in support of gay and lesbian youth and the community I live in. So as Jeanne's guest I am getting ready to leave in a few days to go to Chicago and speak at The 4th Annual Ryan White National Youth Conference on HIV/AIDS. I will be speaking to youths ages 14 to 25 and adult service providers who work with youth on "Starting a Gay/Straight Alliance in School and Building a Positive Community." This is a wonderful opportunity for me and something I have always wanted to do.

Being a positive role model for gay, lesbian and bisexual youth is something all of us adults should be doing. I am looking forward to bringing back information on HIV/AIDS, gay, lesbian and bisexual issues and many other agenda items. If your school or group would like to have me speak, please contact me. A special thanks to Friends North and H.A.N.D.S for supporting me in this venture in Chicago.

Have you ever had someone say something to you that was a bit profound and you couldn't get it off your mind? Well, I was talking

with a Canadian friend the other night on the phone and he was telling me about how much his views on homosexuality have changed over the years. They have changed by educating himself and meeting gay and lesbian folk. He said putting a face to a name is so important in reaching out to others.

I'm not sure how we got on the topic but, we started talking about people having regrets in life. I told him I really didn't have any, as I think holding on to past mistakes is not productive or positive. He said he only has one regret in life and if he could turn back the clock he would. He told me of when he was in middle school and one sunny day, after lunch, his classmates were outside playing. There was an effeminate boy who was by himself and often was the butt of many bad jokes. It was assumed that this boy was gay. Well my friend in Canada, was dared by his buddies, to walk over and smash a piece of cake in this boy's face. And he did. He said if there was ever a way to track this guy down and tell him he's sorry, he would do it. Strange how things always come back to us. Guilt can be a horrible thing to carry around. I'm glad my friend in Canada has grown over the years to understand diversity and how important it is for all of us. I hope he can move on and get rid of his past regret.

Best wishes to the Safe Schools project going on in Traverse City. If you would like to get some information on this contact, M'Lynn through Friends North or at GLSTN Traverse City.

Until next time, seek out positive people, influence others and educate our community. I look forward to writing to you in the next newsletter.

DENIALS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Cindy Robb

Recently, my 21 year old gay son moved home from Chicago. Benjamin is a delightful young man who was going through some growth crunches of "what do I want to do with my life," I was happy that he felt close enough and comfortable enough to go through this growth with us, his family, and had the guts and confidence to come back to the rural farm town of Suttons Bay where he grew up and knew too well the homophobic attitudes that exist here.

One day, he was really down and said to me, "Mom, I wish I had all my school pictures of myself growing up so I could just see how I've evolved to where I am today." I said, "Follow me." We went to a small room in the basement, and with a bit of rearranging, I uncovered a very large trunk. I had not thought about the trunk for many years. It was packed full of EVERYTHING I had saved of Ben's, his lifetime in a box so to speak.

We opened it and both sat on the floor cross-legged and began what would become a long afternoon examining everything from his fifth grade bug collection, to his baby book, to book reports, school papers, report cards, pictures, scrapbooks, articles, letters, clothing from special occasions, and every gift he had ever made for me. We laughed and laughed until our sides hurt, and then at the very bottom of the trunk was a plastic bag. I pulled it out and removed from inside, a small tattered

pair of tap dancing shoes. We both just stopped, tears spilling into our eyes, for these worn tap dancing shoes represented something very deep. I immediately felt sadness and shame.

I think Ben felt badly for me because he knows how much I love him and how I would never consciously hurt him, and yet here in my hands I held the evidence to prove my early denial of who my wonderful son really was and is today. We both knew, without saying a word.

In 1981, Ben was six years old. I was a single mom and I worked three jobs to support us. I always worked when Ben was either asleep or in school. That way, he would think I was always home for him. Ben's interests centered mostly around the arts & entertainment category and I didn't see any problem with any of it until he came home and asked to take tap dancing lessons. I remember like it was yesterday thinking, oh, no, can't you play baseball, or do something more like a "boy." I thought he'd get teased and he already was really exhibiting "sissy" type behavior, I never spoke my conscious thoughts, but SAID, "Well, I'll think about it... but I don't know..."

I was just hoping this whole thing would just go away, but it didn't. Instead of saying 'no' without a good reason, I simply said, "I can't afford to pay for tap dancing lessons." I thought the issue was moot, and I felt relieved, that I could now be more comfortable in my unconscious denial.

Working three jobs and being home during Ben's waking hours was a trick! I worked the night shift in our local hospital, and on Saturday mornings Ben was home but I needed to sleep, so he would wake me and tell me of his plans for the morning, and I would get up around noon. It seemed to me that he was spending a lot of Saturday mornings with "Brian," one of the boys on our block, but I was glad they had such a good time together.

Reality slapped me in the face one Saturday morning when Ben walked in the door a few minutes later than usual, and handed me a pair of tap dancing shoes and a letter and said "Please Mom, don't be mad." I sat down and opened a letter from the Meg Nutting School for Dance. Mrs. Nutting and I knew one another personally. The letter read, "Dear Cindy; I would do anything not to hurt you and I truly hope this does not embarrass you, but Ben has been coming to my Studio of Dance every Saturday morning for the past four months and has shown great interest in taking tap. He just sits and watches my class so intently and I'd inquired many times as to his interest and he finally told me you cannot afford to pay for lessons. I have given Ben this pair of tap shoes for five dollars, and have agreed to give him lessons for one dollar of his allowance money per week, but I still need your permission."

Feeling very guilty, I gave my permission. It wasn't until eleven years later, Ben had the courage to finally come out to me so I could face what I had denied all along.

What those tap shoes represent for me today is the commitment I have to all gay and lesbian youth. I gave my son food, shelter, clothing, my time and all my love and it was not enough, for he knew I didn't want to know who he really was. Today, through my work with PFLAG, I help other parents "wake up" far earlier than I did.

As a matter of fact, a few weeks ago, I spoke with a mother who thinks her seven year old might be gay. That child has a much better chance of growing up healthy, without pain and confusion.

I am committed that my goals for public education of all youth on gay & lesbian issues, will become a reality in my lifetime.

Opening that old trunk that day was no accident. As we walked up the stairs, I turned to Ben and said, "Now do you remember who you are?" and he simply smiled and said, "Thanks, Mom."

A BROTHER'S STORY

Alan Williams

I've known him for over a year now. When we met over the Internet (via a mutual friend), he was not quite 16 years old—a shy, scared kid who lived in my hometown in Illinois. We've never spoken on the phone, and we have only seen pictures of each other, sent over the 'net—but we think of each other as brothers we wished we had instead of our biological ones. We even call each other "bro" when we talk over the 'net. He was unsure of himself, trying to reconcile his strict Christian upbringing with the fact that he might be gay.

We traded long letters. He would write about how he hated himself—mostly how he hated the idea that he was gay. I would write back about how being gay is not an easy thing to deal with at first, and how it takes time to adjust. I would remind him that hating himself didn't make the journey any easier. "Don't give up hope," I would write, time and time again. "There are others like you out there. It's just a matter of time until you find them." He would write to me about his dreams of how much better life would be when he had a boyfriend. I would write back and tell him that happiness lay within, not in the arms of a fantasy lover.

He slowly started to change. He stopped hating himself for being gay. He accepted it, and he acknowledged the frustration of living with parents who couldn't understand him, and living in an area where being young and gay was a sure-fire recipe for being bashed. He went from "I hate being gay" to "I hate being gay where I am." I wrote to him that a time would come when being gay and being himself would be one and the same. "There will be a time and a place," I wrote, "when you will be able to leave the closet behind."

Our conversations moved to the Internet Relay Chat. On IRC, I could respond directly to what he wrote, and even as our friendship grew, he found over IRC what I couldn't give him. He found other gay teens. He was no longer alone, but he was stubborn. "There are others like me," he wrote, "but they're all so far away." At least he'd made a few steps.

Time and time again I worried about him. I would talk to my friends about him. When I met my boyfriend, he would sit and listen to me talk about my little brother. He started talking to my brother too, and in time my boyfriend became my teenage friend/brother's "brother-in-law" and a new confidant.

Another teen came to IRC, and lo and behold, he also lived in my hometown. My brother was scared to talk to him at first—"What if he's really a basher?" he asked—so I spoke to the newcomer and found him to be just what he said he was—another lonely gay teen in need of a friend. "Talk to him," I told my brother. So they did. It wasn't easy at first—they

Brothers (continued next page)

TRAVERSE CITY
NISSAN
VOLVO-ISUZU

Carolyn R. Delo
Sales and Leasing

1331 South Garfield
Traverse City, Michigan 49686

Telephone 616-941-0770
FAX 616-941-8145
1-800-942-4724

liked each other, but each thought the other was disinterested. I became the facilitator, counselor, and pillar of support. I relayed messages, lent the not-so-occasional virtual shoulder, played cheerleader, smacked the wall in frustration, talked to my boyfriend for hours on end about everything. Over time, the friend I cared for like a brother, and the newcomer whom I saw as a friend now, started to open up to each other.

Which naturally meant a monkey wrench would enter.

I got a call from my boyfriend. He asked me to get online to talk to my brother. When I arrived on IRC, I got the news: The newcomer's parents had discovered their son's secret. They were thinking of throwing him out of the house because they didn't want any "queers" living under their roof.

My first thought was a last resort. If my new friend was thrown out of his house, I would take him in. It was a first thought because it would mean he was safe; it was a last resort because I couldn't stand the thought of the two boys being separated by hundreds of miles. My brother became his friend's pillar of support; they would talk to each other on the phone, and then my brother would come online for advice and a listening ear. I saw my brother become a strong young man, with a big heart and a developing real love for the teenager with whom he'd shared so much. It made me wonder how someone not even related to me could be so much like me, for he was responding to his friend the same way that I had responded to him—answering the call of someone who was hurting.

I was so proud of him.

Things calmed down. No one was kicked out of his house. Things began to turn around, and on Valentine's Day, the two boys met for their first date, bringing with them all the feelings that had been growing between them, as well as their feelings about being gay. Afterward my brother wrote to me. "I can actually say," he wrote, "that today was the first day that I was proud to be gay, and felt good about it. I can now realize how normal being gay is and that I like that I am." He told me that what had helped, besides the date, was the issue of XY magazine (a magazine for gay youth) which I had sent to his friend, and which he had received from his friend that night.

I smiled as I read the screen. My brother was finally accepting himself.

He wrote to me again, of a chance meeting the next day with his now-boyfriend. He told me how good it felt to be in each other's arms in a long hug, and how much he felt for his new boyfriend. "I haven't told him yet," my brother wrote, "but I think when I get done talking to him tonight, I'll tell him that I love him. Because I really do." In the time that I have known him, this unofficially-adopted little brother of mine has gone from a shy, scared kid to a young man who has faced his fears and come through them with love in his heart, and someone to share that love with.

I couldn't be prouder if he were my own brother.

AFFIRMING CHRISTIANITY

by Linda Wilson

This article is in response to various articles that have appeared in *Networking 45° North* in the past in reference to "spiritual" or "religious" concerns. I offer the following as one viewpoint of an evangelical Christian Lesbian.

Having learned how easy it is to misunderstand what someone is saying due to the lack of a definition of terms, let me define what I mean by "evangelical" and "Christian" (I am assuming I do not need to define "lesbian!").

By evangelical I am referring to the belief that the Bible is the Word of God, that there is, in fact, a God who has revealed Himself through Jesus Christ, that Jesus Christ is the One through whom one finds eternal life and forgiveness of sins, and that one can have a personal relationship with this God by accepting the life that Jesus Christ has offered. In the old fashioned terminology, one can, indeed, be "born-again" to a fulfilling spiritual life by choosing to follow the Jesus Christ of the Bible.

By Christian I am referring to those who claim to follow the Lord Jesus Christ and who live their lives with the purpose of seeking to know Him better and to live according to the principles set forth in the New Testament. "Church" refers to those who have chosen to believe in and follow Jesus Christ as the "Savior," whereas "church" refers to denominations.

Fundamentalists are those who believe that they hold all truth in their group, and feel they have an obligation to keep the faith as they define it, pure and undefiled by any opinion that might differ from what they believe to be true. They cite Old Testament stories of "God" telling Israel to stomp out the enemies and to maintain themselves as separate and distinct from the surrounding peoples, as evidence and authority that today, as the Church of God, they must eradicate the "opposition" which, in one instance, happens to be us!

It is important not to react in like kind to the type of angry, irrational behavior that the churches have demonstrated towards the gay and lesbian community. My own mother supports the OCA in Oregon and subscribes to both Pat Robertson's and James Dobson's literature. She is such a sweet person in so many ways, but she has never taken the time (nor does she have the inclination), to study any other possible biblical interpretation than the one she has heard in her church and in the literature she receives.

There are thousands of examples that one could find to prove the

Sno-Trac Village Resort

THE GREAT YEAR-ROUND ESCAPE PLACE

CAMPING - CABINS & DORMITORY

- Full Facility Resort
- Nature Trails
- On Site Storage
- Hot Showers
- LP Gas Refill
- Rec Room
- Park Store



SNOWMOBILE SERVICE CENTER

- 28 Years Experience
- Open 10 to 10 Daily
- Parts, Oil & Fuel
- Indoor Storage
- Access to Trails

Many fine restaurants nearby
60 Acre spread with trout stream

Lovells Area
3576 Sno-Trac Trail
Grayling, MI 49738

☎ 517 348 9494

800 348 9490

THE BOOKIE JOINT

RECYCLED PAPERBACKS

ALSO SPECIALIZING IN

ALTERNATIVE & LESBIAN/GAY MAGAZINES AND BOOKS

WOMYN'S MUSIC, USED RECORDS AND COMICS

120 S. UNION ST. • TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684

616-946-8862

point that some will never take the time to listen to a differing opinion. This may be a fault of the church, but it is certainly not the fault of the Church. Those who are truly part of the Church recognize that they do not hold all truth in their hands, and that there just might be something outside of their knowledge that is, indeed, truth.

For me, any truth is from God because I start with the premise that God is pure truth, pure love, etc. However, because of the deep hurt that has been caused by those who call themselves Christians, especially by those who call themselves evangelical Christians, it is necessary to write an article such as this one. Why? Because I too am an evangelical Christian who is so deeply committed to Jesus Christ.

I cannot conscientiously be a part of any of those groups because they have a flaw in their understanding of the Bible that does not permit one to be committed to Jesus Christ and be called an evangelical Christian, and be gay or lesbian!

However, it is an entirely inappropriate response to turn away from the truth of the Bible and the meaningfulness of a relationship with Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit to grow in that relationship, simply because the church has problems. Yes, I have trouble with churches. No, I do not have trouble with Jesus Christ. Nor do I have trouble with the Bible as my sole source of information about Jesus Christ, and the principles for living as explained in the New Testament. I am unable to live completely that which I fully understand, let alone worry about those parts I do not!

I wish everyone who loved and followed Jesus Christ would demonstrate by their tolerance and understanding, His attitudes and attributes. I wish I could do that completely. But I am imperfect and working on areas of my life that need to be healed, transformed, stretched, and much more. The experience I have with Jesus Christ is so much more precious and meaningful than the obvious hatred and anger of others who claim to know Him, that I hold on to my faith and ask that He would somehow touch their lives. However, to turn from my faith because of the inconsistency, mean-spiritedness, and error of a large part of "Christian" churches, would be no different than not taking advantage of many things that are good for me but are abused by others (i.e., motor vehicles, medicine, sex, food, love, government, religion, etc.)

When I was in the church, I heard accusations that we were intolerant and unloving towards those who were "pagan." Now that I am outside of the church I find that those who are not Christians can be intolerant and unloving as they claimed the church was. My choice of my faith, my personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and my belief in the Bible as God's Word, deserve to be respected by those who do not agree

with me in the same manner as they wish for me to be respectful of their choice to believe or not believe in something of their own. I do not follow my faith blindly, nor with a lack of intellectual integrity. I do not choose to be an evangelical Christian oblivious to the sickness that pervades so much of traditional church life these days. I study profusely to come to the conclusions that make up the meaning in my spiritual life. And I am at peace.

If there is enough interest to do so, I would gladly provide a study of different passages in the Bible to show that they are being interpreted in light of what some groups wish to have as their agenda against gays and lesbians. The reality of both history and church history proves them wrong, as well as do the actual words used in the Bible that today are translated as "homosexual."

No where does the Bible specifically condemn loving, same-sex acts. Also, the words that could have been used, had the writers wanted to specify "loving same sex acts," were not used — neither in the Old or New Testaments. The major "proof" Scriptures are Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, Genesis chapters 18, 19, and 20 which recount the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, Romans 1:16-32, I Corinthians 6:9-11, I Timothy 1:9-10, and the book of Jude, verse 7.

Not one of these passages in the Hebrew Old Testament, Greek New Testament, or Greek Septuagint, uses the words that were commonly used to signify homosexual. None of them is used to define homosexuality as sin. Obviously, if the actual word for homosexuality is not even used, then it follows that it is impossible for it to be classified as a sin from these Scriptures. If God hated homosexuals and homosexuality (loving same-sex relationships) so much, one would think, (since He is believed to have inspired the writers) that He could have at least used the words that everyone in that time and place understood to mean homosexuality. However, He did not. That is a highly significant fact. There is more. It takes a long time to discuss all the ramifications of condemning homosexuality because many other traditional beliefs (i.e., the belief that marriage is principally for the purpose of procreation, the purpose of the Law, etc.) have to be dismantled one by one to come to the truth of the Bible.

To conclude for now: if you were, or are, a Christian and gay or lesbian, and would like to follow your faith with joy and peace, rest assured you certainly can! You are a great and wonderful creation of a loving Creator. He made us, and He loves us.

Linda Wilson, BS, MA, DD is a practicing massage therapist in Suttons Bay, Michigan, an instructor at Kirtland Community College, and presently is seeking ordination.


Duneswood
in NORTHERN MICHIGAN

a women's resort
with 12 private
housekeeping rooms
nestled on 7 acres
of secluded woods

Also
nearby **Marge & Joanne's B&B**

WOMEN ONLY
Open all year, Near Traverse City.
PO Box 457, Glen Arbor, MI 49636

(616) 334-3346

 **Tranex
Financial Inc.**

The Residential Mortgage Lender

Andrew R. McKnight
Loan Officer

Office: (517) 485-8886
Fax: (517) 485-0637
Home: (517) 487-5574

524 S. Walnut St.
Lansing, MI 48933-2207

C L A S S I F I E D S

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

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

VOLLEYBALL!: Anyone interested in playing volleyball at the 1998 Gay Games in Amsterdam, please call to discuss. Contact Bill at 616-845-5220. (issue 4)

GLSTN - Traverse City: The next scheduled meeting is March 17th at 7:00 pm, at Third Level on Front St., in TC, and the featured speaker will be Greg Baird, from Petoskey. Greg has just returned from the Ryan White convention and will have a lot to share with the group. All are welcome! Contact M'Lynn at 943-8800 (issue 2)

GAY-LESBIAN BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP is meeting monthly on the first Tuesday of each month, 7:30 pm, at Border's Bookstore on S. Airport Rd., T.C. For info, call Border's at 933-0412 and ask for Joe. (issue 4)

ON-GOING ANNOUNCEMENTS

GAY GAMES IN 1998: Team Great Lakes is organizing for the upcoming games in Amsterdam, scheduled for August 1-5, 1998. Those interested, please call Ann Heler at 810-547-4692. Team Great Lakes sent 180 individual athletes and teams to New York City in '94. (Issue 6)

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 2)

PLEASE SPONSOR OUR POSTCARD PROJECT: They do make a difference! The cost for printing the 2800 postcards is \$100.00. To contribute specifically to the Postcard Project, please call Richard at 271-3042 or send a check (in an amount of \$100.00 or less) directly to Friends North. (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 6)

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF PETOSKEY is meeting at the Concord Academy, 2230 East Mitchell St. Services will be held on alternate Sundays with dates disclosed in their newsletter, Diversity. Please call 348-3117 for details or write to us at POB 271, Petoskey, MI 49770-0271 (Issue 6)

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 6)

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 6)

PERSONALS:

ROOMMATE WANTED for shared housing. Private room with cable, laundry, for \$210/month. Phone 935-3749 (issue 2)

GWF-Age 51, shirt and jeans woman... loves good company, long Sunday drives, country music, nature, picnics, camping, and much more. I am honest, sincere, caring and romantic. Looking for a good close friend and possibly more, so any singles out there, please write. I will answer all.

Sharon, 8595 N.E. Limits, Mancelona, MI 49659 (issue 2)

GWF-43, Never married. Looking to meet new friends; soon to have new location-hopefully real soon. Redneck town's not for me after six years moving back home from the city. Time to move on and out. Write to: Vickie Glied, 17768 S. Tilson Rd., Rudyard, MI 49780. Relocation upon finding a new residence and the sale of the current residence. New job location with Restaurant Mgmt. as profession. Send name, address and or phone number and I will respond. (issue 3)

ROOMMATE WANTED TO SHARE 3 bedroom home in north T.C. Person must like animals, nonsmoker; close to lake, washer/dryer, large yard. References and Deposit: Shelley 946-1085 (issue 2)

GROUPS:

FRIENDS NORTH BOARD AND MEMBER MEETINGS: The Friends North Board meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm. at their NEW LOCATION at Grace Episcopal Church, corner of Washington and Boardman Streets, across from the Old Courthouse. ALL ARE WELCOME, (issue 1)

COMMON VOICES-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 or Ed at 947-4697. (issue 2)

GLSTN, the Gay-Lesbian-Straight Teachers Network, is meeting the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Third Level, 1022 East Front Street, Traverse City. They welcome all interested educators. For more information, call M'Lynn at 943-5050. (issue 6)

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 4)

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 2)

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 2)

TRAVERSE CITY FRONTRUNNERS If you are interested in running, call Paul or Jim at 271-4510 and leave your name, number, and that you are interested in Frontrunners. We will return your call with information on where to meet. All ages and abilities are welcome. (issue 4)

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 6)

THE PETOSKEY GROUP: A social group for lesbian, gay and bi-sexual persons is meeting weekly in Petoskey. The group meets at 7 p.m. Thursdays at the Park Garden Cafe on Lake Street. For information please contact Tim at 348-8151 (issue 3)

NORTHERN MICHIGAN WOMYN'S CHOIR is always looking for new voices. To obtain more information or for a performance schedule, please contact Deb at 275-5924. (issue 3)

H.A.N.D.S is an HIV/AIDS Network located in Petoskey. They are currently

FRIENDS NORTH SCHOLARSHIP FUND

As mentioned in the President's Column, the Friends North Board recently developed and approved a policy/procedure and application form to access the Friends North Scholarship Fund (formerly known as the Community Needs Fund). You will recall that part of each membership fee is designated to help maintain this fund, as well as other donations which are specified to go into this account. This fund is yet another benefit of becoming a member of the organization! Contact any board member or call our phone line to receive an application.

FRIENDS NORTH, INC SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Application Date: _____

Applicant Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Are you a current Friends North Member: ___ Yes ___ No

Verified by: _____
(Board Member)

Amount Requested: _____

Needed by: _____
(date)

Total Fees (if different from above amount: _____

Event Title: _____

Event Location: _____

Event Date: _____

Mail to:
Friends North, Inc.
PO Box 562
Traverse City, MI 49685-0562

Received by: _____
(Board Member)

Approved: _____
(Board President or Designee)

Approval Date: _____

Check No.: _____

Date Check Mailed to Applicant: _____

Treasurer's Initials: _____

FRIENDS NORTH, INC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

POLICY/PROCEDURE

POLICY:

Friends North, Inc., shall maintain and administer a scholarship fund available to members in good standing of Friends North. Monies for this fund shall be collected from donations, a percentage of membership fees, and Board approval of general operating funds. These funds are to be used specifically for gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender educational pursuits.

PROCEDURE:

1. Application is made by any member of Friends North to any member of the Board of Directors.
2. A majority of the Board of Directors must approve the scholarship request (in quorum) at the next scheduled Board meeting. (At the discretion of the President of the Board, this may be done in an informal meeting, i.e., phone, via fax, e-mail, etc.)
3. A maximum scholarship of \$100 or any portion thereof may be awarded.
4. Scholarships are limited to once per year per member.
5. Scholarships are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis as funds are available.
6. Scholarship recipients are required to report to the Board (oral or written) within sixty (60) days of the event date.
7. The Board of Directors may, with a 2/3 majority of the full Board, direct a larger amount than the maximum to be awarded.

ALBRECHT & JENNINGS ART ENTERPRISES
3546 Woodland Trail
Williamsburg, MI 49690

616-938-2163

**MICHELANGELO, MACKINTOSH
and 200 ART DEALERS IN CHICAGO
FRIDAY, MAY 9 - SUNDAY, MAY 11, 1997**

-----DETACH AND SEND-----

**MICHELANGELO, MACKINTOSH and 200 ART DEALERS IN CHICAGO
MAY 9 - MAY 11, 1997**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE-DAY _____ EVENING _____

SINGLE _____ DOUBLE _____ TRIPLE _____ SMOKING yes no

KING _____ TWINS _____ ROLLAWAY _____ HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE yes no

ROOMMATE(S) _____

We will **NOT** assign roommates

CREDIT CARD # _____ EXP. _____ MC, AMX, VISA, CB, DC

(TO HOLD THE HOTEL ROOM)

NAME ON CARD _____

Enclose \$112.00 (check or money order, **NO CREDIT CARDS FOR REGISTRATION**) for transportation and museum tickets. THIS MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 2. **NO REFUNDS AFTER APRIL 2.** Please pay by check or money order made out to Albrecht & Jennings Art Enterprises.

SURVEY FOR SPEAKER'S LIST

P-FLAG is compiling a list of persons who would be willing to speak to groups and/or participate in panel discussions.

From time to time P-FLAG receives a request from a group or organization asking for discussion concerning our gay\lesbian children and friends and our relationships to our community.

This is an excellent format Parents and Friends can use to share their acceptance and appreciation. It is yet one more opportunity for our gay and lesbian friends and children to share their stories.

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS QUESTIONNAIRE TO HELP US FILL THESE REQUESTS

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ day _____ evening

TIME OF DAY YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO ATTEND: _____

TOPICS you would be comfortable discussing:

Parenting _____ Family Concerns _____

Legal Issues _____ Human Rights _____

Local Issues _____ Myths _____

Local\National Statistics _____

Local\National Opportunities _____

Other: _____

Comments: _____

Information/resources/training are available.

Please contact or send this form to: Penny Smith
10960 Blue Ridge Ln #37
Traverse City, MI 49684
Phone: (616) 947-4462
E-mail ar967@traverse.lib.mi.us
Fax: (616) 929-5593

seeking volunteers in the northern lower peninsula and eastern upper peninsula of Michigan. HANDS is a non-profit organization that has committed itself to helping and supporting the needs of HIV infected persons. They offer a number of services, including support groups, education, public awareness, and one-on-one friendship support. Volunteers are urgently needed in the Alpena, Gaylord, and Rogers City areas. If you would be interested in the program, please call 616-526-9213. (issue 6)

GAY ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: Meetings for gays and lesbians are held each Saturday at 11:00 am and have been moved to a new location at Grace Episcopal Church, corner Washington and Boardman Streets in TC. For further info, call John at 922-0746 or Tom at 947-4647. (issue 6)

FRIENDS LIKE US: A social group in north east lower Michigan for gay, lesbian, and bisexual people. Meets monthly. For info, please contact Jeff @ 517-354-7702, or write to him at POB 391, Alpena, MI 49707. (issue 4)

LETTERS

Thank You,

As one of the two friends who helped Carol at the end, and who was with her from the beginning of her battle, I deeply appreciate the comments from Ed Richardson and Gene Strang in your last issue.

Carol was a "people" person, but during her two-year ordeal, she used all her strength to fight the cancer. Unfortunately that took her out of the community.

To those who helped over the two years, giving her rides to the hospital, etc. thank you.

To Ed, Gene & John who saw Carol shortly before her death, thank you for caring.

On a personal note, to those volunteers and care givers who are helping a terminally person now or will in the future, I pray God gives you strength. I never could have imagined how difficult it could be, emotionally and physically.

Hospice was absolutely wonderful, but we found that nurses, either the Hospice of privately paid, were not available. Trying to get some away time was nearly impossible.

Volunteers and care givers are very important, and although its frustrating at times, and you feel you aren't doing enough, don't despair. You are helping someone the best, you can. Even if you don't think that person is aware. You are with them at a time when no one should be alone. Feel good about yourself for that.

Kathy.

SHARED LETTERS —

*Reactions to the death of Gerry Crane
with thanks to Kathryn Holdin for submitting*

Crane gave so much to world

I knew Gerry Crane. My family and I met Gerry and Randy through mutual friends, and we consider ourselves fortunate. Gerry was a decent, kind and honest young man who had a solid, strong commitment to educating children, to his life partner Randy, to his family of friends and to God.

He had the courage of his convictions and he didn't lose this courage or his convictions in what was probably the worst trial by fire of his life. This world needs more principled people, more men like Gerry and Randy who aren't afraid of commitments, and who are willing to stand up for what they believe regardless of the adversity and personal cost.



Randy Block and Gerry Crane

And what a cost it has been. His smile and his music have left us.

Gerry Crane was an honorable man, and he will be missed, but he will not be forgotten. His time in this world was too short.

Cheryl Mellblom, Grand Rapids.

Follow Christ's message of love

I have been following the controversy in the Public Pulse letters regarding the Byron Center teacher, Gerry Crane.

The anger, sadness and self-righteousness has gone on long enough to turn everyone's stomach.

If I recall, in the Bible (which so many have taken to thumping so very soundly) Christ gives us a new commandment to love one another. I don't recall Him giving us the right to judge anyone. He doesn't call us to judge — only to love, for love is the fulfillment of the law. Love does not harm to a neighbor. And we are told that God is a just judge who rewards the good and punishes the wicked. But we are not called upon to make that distinction.

JenTees
custom screen printing

Full Service Apparel Printing

Also
Team Uniforms ▼ Buttons ▼ Embroidery ▼ Photo Items

516 E. Eighth St. Traverse City, MI.

616-929-3610



Open Monday-Saturday - 6:00 pm — Sunday at 2:00 pm

616-935-1666-520 Franklin ▼ Traverse City, MI 49684

Proudly Gay Owned and Operated since 1989

WORDS AND MUSIC: A LOOK AT BOOKS, MAGAZINES, CD'S AND TAPES

Rick Gould

Spring is around the corner, last chance for Winter reading. Here's a list from different book and music stores around our Michigan area.

At The **Bookie Joint**, Shelley says they've had such a great success selling new at 25% off that they'll stay in the new book business for a while. Also, they have a growing selection of used books at half the original cover price. This book business is on the cutting edge these days! Shelley gave us these suggestions:

Too Queer, by Victoria Brownworth, \$10.50, save over \$3.00. Brownworth's writing screams "Pay attention!"

Finale, edited by Michael Nava, \$8.25. Murder, mystery and the macabre, chronicled by today's best gay and lesbian mystery writers.

The Alyson Almanac 1997 Edition, edited by Gerry Kroll, \$8.98. An all-new edition of the most reliable book available to the gay and lesbian community with a cyber guide to lesbian and gay on-line services.

And music: Between the Covers, Cris Williamson and Tret Fure, Cassette- \$9.95, CD-\$14.95. Long time musicians and mates, this duo creates some love-ly music. (Tickets to their May 9 Lansing concert are available at the Bookie Joint.)

Work Out, the ultimate disc for exercise and dance. Cass.- \$10.95, CD-\$16.95.

At **Borders**, Aimee gave us this list:

Stages of Desire: Gay Theatre's Hidden History, by Carl Miller, \$17.95. Sort of a "Celluloid Closet" for the theatre, Miller's book charts the history of gay and lesbian representation on stage, from Shakespeare to the 19th Century. Gives a fresh gay look at many classic plays and brings forth rediscovered texts with gay or lesbian themes.

1997 Damron Women's Traveler, \$11.95 Don't leave home without this indispensable guide to everything lesbian on the road. Provides a city by city look at where to stay, what clubs to check out, special events, and community centers. Great for the girl who is always on the go.

Funny Time to Be Gay, Ed Karvoski, Jr., \$12.00 Introduces us to over 30 gay and lesbian comedians who tell their stories and those of the gay community in ways guaranteed to make you smile, and quite often laugh out loud. Pokes fun at stereotypes and makes us realize that life is indeed what you make of it.

At **AB CD's**, Norm gave us these suggestions:

The English Patient, Original Soundtrack. From the Academy Award nominated film. This is a guaranteed Oscar winner for best score.

Underworld, Second Toughest in the Infants. Techno at its very best. This is a can't miss issue that appeared on several "Best of" lists for the year end in 1996.

Gay Happenings, Volume 4. We loved Volume 1, we like volume 2 & 3 - so here's Volume #4. Included with this volume is Alicia Bridges, Hannah Jones and Sin with Sebastian.

Of Rage & Remembrance, Corigliano Symphony #1, Leonard Slatkin and the National Symphony Orchestra. Music defined by its inspiration, signal works from the AIDS era. Symphony, mezzo-soprano, Men's Chorus, boy soprano, low strings, timpani and chimes. This was a Grammy-awarded nominated recording.

Picture This, Jim Brickman. The third installment from solo pianist on Windham Hill Records. In its second week of release, it's already number 43 on the Billboard Charts. Featuring country vocalist Martina McBride.

At **Open Mind Books** in Sault Ste. Marie, Dan gave us the following suggestions:

Meow-mories, by Julia Willis, \$6.95. No, it's not the unauthorized biography of Andrew Lloyd Webber. It's that lesbian humorist offering a charming, rib-tickling illustrated "baby book" for cats. Not scotties?

Rainbow Arc of Fire by Greg Sanchez, \$11.95. A novel of magic and enlightenment set amongst the gay community of Colorado.

Out With It: Gay and Straight Teens Write About Homosexuality, edited by Andrea Estepa and Al Desetta, \$8.00. In magazine format, this title offers eye-opening insights on how young people view Les/Bi/Gays.

Mythology of Transgression: Homosexuality as Metaphor, by Jamake Highwater, \$23.00. An analytic work that explores how sexual outsiders create cultural change.

At **Waldenbooks**, Kevin gave us this list:

Life is Not a Rehearsal, by David Brudnoy, \$22.95. When this conservative talk show host returned to his show after a hiatus, he shocked his audience with an electrifying monologue in which he revealed that he was gay and HIV-positive. The overwhelming support he received from an audience not usually tolerant of gay/ issues was an even bigger surprise. Read this memoir.

Best Gay Erotica 1997, selected by Doug Sadownick, edited by Richard Labonte. \$14.95.

Best Lesbian Erotica 1997, selected by Jewelle Gomez, edited by Tristan Taorimo. \$14.95.

Dream Boy by Jim Grimsley, by \$11.00. This novel recounts the story of first love between two adolescent boys who bravely sustain each other in a world of domestic disintergration.

Coming out of Shame: Transforming Gay and Lesbian Lives, by Gershen Kaufman, Ph.D. and Lev Raphael, Ph.D. Now in Paper back at \$11.00. This book exposes the role shame has come to play in the lives of gays and lesbians, and how to begin a path toward growth and acceptance.

Sanctuary: A Tale of Life in the Woods, by Paul Monette. Illustrated by Vivienne Flesher, \$16.00. This is the fine author's last work.

At **B. Dalton's**, several gay periodicals are carried, including Advocate, Out, and Genre.

These stores appreciate your business and suggestions.

Suzette Corbit, Chiropractor



- Activator Method (low force technique) and gentle manual adjusting
- Massage Therapy
- Holistic Health & Wellness Educator

814-B S. Garfield • Traverse City, MI 49686
Res: 616-275-2502 • Office 616-933-4424

NEWS IN BRIEF

Henderson Doesn't Discriminate

The City of Henderson has apparently become the first municipality in the state of Kentucky to publicly state that it does not discriminate in employment matters based on sexual orientation. Without public fanfare, celebration or dissent the words "sexual orientation" were added to the non-discrimination list and to all employment applications.

Israeli Military Grants Equal Rights to Gay Partner

The Israeli military recently made a landmark decision by granting the rights of a spouse to the gay partner of a deceased officer.

Cobb County, Georgia Turns Against Past

Bill Byrne, the Chairman of the Cobb County Commission, said that the anti-gay resolution of 1993 is history. With a new Board as well as with the push of the Cobb Citizens Coalition, the Board rescinded the original resolution which forced the Olympic Committee to ban events from taking place within the county.

Austin Elects Lesbian Sheriff

Austin, Texas, the self-described progressive capital city of a conservative state, elected the first open lesbian to the post of sheriff. Margo Frasier, a lawyer and former jail supervisor in Travis County, defeated her Republican opponent by a four point margin. She also became the first woman to assume the position.

"People in Austin have a reputation for being a real fair-minded community," said Kathleen DeBold of the Gay/Lesbian Victory Fund. Frasier's opponent did not use her sexual orientation as an issue in the campaign, saying that it wasn't relevant.

There is Gay Life in Rapid City

South Dakota's first statewide organization for g/l/b/t persons opened offices on Rapid City's Main Street in early February. Space is provided for a gay library, a community center, and offices for the group. Nearly 800 books and more than 1,000 periodicals are in the collection at present.

Anchorage Allows Gay Clubs

The Anchorage, Alaska School Board has passed a final decision regarding school clubs. They decided to continue allowing non-curriculum clubs, including the Diamond High Gay/Straight Alliance. An amendment was included, however, to require parental permission slips be signed-forms which must include the club's statement of purpose- before a student can be permitted to join. That amendment passed. This decision effectively ends the debate over school clubs.

Ellen's Big Day Set

According to the February 14 Hollywood Reporter, ABC has tentatively set April 30th as the date for Ellen to come out as a lesbian. "The final thumbs-up on Ellen's outing depends on ABC and Disney executives approving a script, which has not yet been submitted," spies said. Additionally, sources have revealed that Oprah Winfrey has been approached to play Ellen's therapist.

Christian Reformed Church in Canada Supports Gays

An official body of the CRC in Canada, the Canadian arm of the Grand Rapids, Michigan-based Christian Reformed Church, has provoked a firestorm of controversy on both sides of the border. It has told the Canadian government it supports legislation protecting the civil rights of gays and lesbians in regard to housing, employment, and other services. The church also suggested that legislation should somehow accommodate same-sex partnership, arguing that "mutually supportive relationships of a private and perhaps intimate nature other than those understood by the familiar and historic terms" of family and marriage "should be given a wholly new designation." (A more detailed report may be found in the RNS Daily Report, @www.religionnews.com)

Don't Ask-Don't Tell Upheld

The U.S. Court of Appeals in San Francisco upheld the military's ban on off-duty homosexual conduct, ruling that the policy is constitutional even though it treats gays and heterosexuals differently. The decision is the third by a federal appeals court to approve the Clinton administration's policy on gay and lesbians in the military. Judge Pamela Rymer said for the court: "For nearly 20 years, we have upheld the constitutionality of the military's authority to discharge service members who engage in homosexual acts. We have concluded that maintaining effective armed forces is indisputably a compelling governmental purpose and that the policy of excluding from the military those members who engage in homosexual conduct is rationally related to that purpose."

Wayne-Westland, Michigan Schools Adopt New Policy

The Wayne-Westland School Board has adopted policies banning "discriminatory harassment" of employees, board members, and students on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, age, sex, height, weight, marital status, handicap or disability. This policy applies to employees, vendors, contractors or others doing business with the school district, students, invitees, guests, etc. The new policy was adopted unanimously by the Board of Education in January.

SPECIALIZING IN HOLISTIC APPROACHES FOR 15 YEARS

Creative Solutions through Hypnotherapy
Hypnotherapy will give you the Tools to Change your Life!

Joanna T. Lauber,
M.A., O.T.R., P.C.
Certified
Hypnotherapist

Call now for your free
phone consultation-

616-947-8842
convenient midtown
location, free parking
733 E. Eighth St., T.C.



Hypnotherapy can help in:

- relationship conflicts
- addictions
- eating disorders
- depression & anxiety
- stress management
- self esteem issues
- pain management
- women's issues
- childhood trauma
- spiritual crisis

MCMANUS JOINS CIVIL RIGHTS PANEL

TRAVERSE CITY—State Rep. Michelle McManus, a leading opponent of “reverse discrimination,” has been given the top Republican spot on the House Constitutional and Civil Rights Committee.

McManus, R-Lake Leelanau, vowed to work for “individual rights” as opposed to “group rights” in her post as vice chairwoman of the committee. In the past, she has sponsored legislation to ban preferential treatment based on gender, national origin, religion, age, height, weight, familial status or marital status.

“Choosing to support group rights at the expense of individual rights perpetuates bias and pushes people farther apart,” McManus said in a prepared news release. “I look forward to working on this committee as an advocate for every resident, and not just a select few.”

Her legislation would have affected affirmative action plans of state and local governments.

The civil rights appointment didn’t sit well with Marvine Stamatakis, chairwoman of the Traverse City Human Rights Commission.

“It is a setback for women, people of color and gays and lesbians.” she said. “I know she is opposed to affirmative action. I’ve never heard her make any statements supporting civil rights issues. I feel there is a valid issue to righting past wrongs.”

McManus also was reappointed by the Republican Party to the revised Human Services and Children Committee and the Conservation, Environment and Recreation Committee.

Get Ready for the...

1997 MICHIGAN PRIDE MARCH

Bill Beachler, Publisher Gay & Lesbian News, East Lansing

The plans for the 1997 Michigan Pride March are well underway. This year’s activities will occur on June 20, 21 and 22, 1997. The march and festival this year will again be on Saturday based upon last year’s success. Block these days off your calendar now!

The Michigan Pride Committee has chosen the following theme: FREE TO BE... The GLBT community should be free to be happy, free to be employed, free to be married, free to be home owners, free to be pregnant and have children, free to be healthy, safe, out, alive, loved and in love. These are the basic human rights that all people should have and the equal rights the GLBT community wants.

Based upon 130 couples participating in last year’s marriage ceremony, the Committee hopes to continue the ceremony. Also, this year the Committee is introducing a few features—the Living SAFE Project. This project will include issues such as breast cancer, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, substance abuse and partner abuse. Based upon the success of last year’s beer tent sponsored by Mill Beer, the Committee is again looking for corporate sponsors. Finally, the Committee is considering having a community picnic at the Potter park Zoo on Sunday to include volleyball, canoeing, biking, roller-blading and barbecuing as well as exploring the zoo.

The bad news last year is that the Committee ended the march in debt. Therefore, the Committee has become a 501(c)(3) organization and is looking for memberships and donations. Checks may be made payable to Michigan Pride and mailed to P.O. Box 16191, Lansing, MI 48901. If you have questions, you may call the Pride Hotline at (517) 482-8656 or visit the Michigan Pride World Wide Web site at <http://www.myne.com/501c/michprid/michprid.htm>

ESSAY

Ian Whitney

I have never heard any one state that growing up is an easy process. If it were, then perhaps more people would attempt to do so. In any case, growing up is a difficult and grueling road trip that leads from one state of mind to another, never ending. For the “typical” straight person, the transition into adulthood is, well, hellish. It is like driving down a highway on which there are many traffic jams that one must navigate through in order to reach the targeted destination.

In this analogy then, the road for gay adolescents is more like a two-track in the Arctic Circle. This road is also covered with jammed traffic, and in the sections that are one-way, semis with full trailers speed towards you in the wrong direction. You just have to deal with it.

I am, in many ways, an exception to the stereotypes that even people in the older gay community and myself have developed about gay youth. Or, perhaps I am not. In any case, most of my family (both immediate and extended) know that I am gay, and they are all as accepting and supportive as they can possibly be. The initial reaction of most of my relatives has been, to this point, one that focuses not on my sexual orientation or behavior but rather on how my sexual orientation will make my life harder. Overall, however, being gay has not made my life as difficult as the lives of many gay teenagers, and that is an assumption- I know very few gay youth in this area (they are there, but not out), and am therefore forced to rely upon generalizations. I have seen the statistics, but then again, they are only numbers. Knowing the people is different.

Aside from those at Interlochen (which is my school and another reality altogether, and unreality but the way that it should be), I know very few gay youth. I can say, with near confidence, that I know all of those who are out within the gay community. At the high school in Traverse City, there are only two “openly” gay people (“openly-” will admit to someone other than themselves that they are gay), and even they are somewhat closeted. In Traverse City, especially at the school level, being closeted is part of everyday existence. I guess that this is where I am, at most, an exception. I am so far out of the closet that I can no longer see its entrance. Though this is not something to brag about, it is nothing to be ashamed of. But it often confuses me.

Honestly, the hardest part of growing up gay is, in my case, being one of the few “out” people in Traverse City. I often ask myself why I, at seventeen, am more “out” than people twice or three times my age. To some in this area, I am the first openly gay person that they know. I had thought that the closeted part of the gay community was just insecure, ashamed, or lacking courage. I have come to realize, however, that those are not the reasons. Stepping out of the closet is not always the best choice socially, personally, or economically. For me, life has seemed much easier since I came out. Perhaps not easier- it just makes more sense.

Making sense out of life is hard to do. Why am I gay? Why do people hate me because I’m gay? I cannot make sense out of that. Perhaps when I am older, I will understand. No. I will never be able to understand hate. It is hard to understand love too. If only we would sit and be, alive and happy in our existence and not interfering with

Essay (continued next page)

the existence of others. That sounds like my definition of sensitivity, a quality of maturity. Oh well, society has a lot of maturing, a lot of growing up, to do. I ask myself- do we want to?

Bio- Ian Whitney lives in Leelanau County and is a student at the Interlochen Arts Academy.

He can be reached via e-mail at either WHITNEYIJ@interlochen.k12.mi.us or Moktir@aol.com.

LAMBDA LEGAL DEFENSE (USE LOGO)

Tom Stoddard Dies

Thomas Stoddard, a civil rights lawyer who helped lead the fight for gays to serve openly in the military, has died at age 48. Stoddard died Wednesday of AIDS, according to his companion, Walter Rieman.

As executive director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund from 1986 to 1992, Stoddard fought for equal rights for gay men, lesbians and people with AIDS. He maintained his public role after leaving the organization and after becoming ill, most recently leading the unsuccessful lobbying to end the ban against gays serving openly in the military. More militant activists considered his approach too conciliatory.

Former Mayor Ed Koch praised Stoddard's authorship of a 1986 New York City law that protects gays against discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodation. "He was an extraordinary lawyer." said Koch.

An early proponent of gay marriage, Stoddard and colleagues debated the issue in a road show to build support within the gay community, said Peg Byron, Lambda's public education director. Stoddard and Rieman, also a lawyer, exchanged wedding vows and gold bands in 1993.

DISNEY UNDER ATTACK

Three denominations have been added to a growing list of Christian groups calling on the Walt Disney Company to return to a more pro-family approach in its entertainment offerings. The three groups whose stances have received recent attention are the Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.), the Presbyterian Church in America and the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.

Last June, messengers to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention passed a resolution calling on Baptists "to give prayerful and serious consideration" to whether to attend Disney theme parks and purchase Disney products. The resolution suggested a boycott of Disney if it continues "this anti-Christian and anti-family trend."

The executive council of the Church of God adopted a resolution strongly critical of Disney and calling on the church's worldwide membership of 4 million members and 2,500 congregations to consider a boycott. The church has 800,000 members and 6,500 congregations in the United States.

The Church of God's resolution listed several concerns, including:

- publication of "Growing Up Gay" by Disney-owned Hyperion Press. The book encourages teens to explore homosexuality, the resolution said.
- release of the movie "Priest" by Disney-owned Miramax, an action the resolution called "a disappointing departure from Disney's image of producing wholesome family films."
- provision of health insurance to "same-sex companions of gay and lesbian employees" of Disney.
- Disney's hosting of "Gay and Lesbian Day" at Disney World in Orlando.

The Presbyterian Church in America passed a similar though much shorter statement against Disney during its assembly meeting in Coral Ridge, Fla. The one-sentence declaration adopted by the meeting of 2,000 PCA delegates said: "We abhor what Disney and other corporations do to promote the homosexual lifestyle."

FRIENDS NORTH, INC., P.O. BOX 562, TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49685-0562

YES, I want to be a supporting member of the Friends North Organization

Single: \$15.00 Couple: \$25.00 (includes one-year newsletter subscription)

I am enclosing an additional: 10.00 20.00 40.00

and I would like to see this used for: Newsletter Where needed Education Fund

Optional First Class Mailing \$8.00

Total Enclosed

\$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

I would like to continue receiving the newsletter but am unable to contribute.

I am New to the mailing list. I am already on mailing list. Note my new address. Please remove me from your mailing list.

The F/N mailing list is confidential and our mailings come in an unmarked envelope.



TEXACO
2000 Westchester Avenue
White Plains, NY 10650

January 27, 1997

To: Mr. Henry D. Messer, MD FACS
23248 Bonair, Dearborn Heights, MI 48127

Dear Mr. Messer:

This is in response to your letter of December 26, 1996 to Peter I. Bijur, which has been referred to me for handling. In the letter, you refer to the absence of "any mention of gay and lesbian employees" in Mr. Bijur's letter to shareholders of November 26.

In reply to your concerns, Texaco's policies dictate that employment-related decisions are to be based solely on job related factors (i.e. education, skills, prior work experience, performance, etc.). This principle precludes discrimination of any kind towards employees or candidates for employment.

As has been our company's practice, one's sexual orientation is not a factor in determining employment and advancement opportunities within Texaco. Furthermore, our company's policies addressing discrimination are consistent with the constitutionally guaranteed protection as defined in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Our policies are also consistent with generally accepted industry practices.

As we have publicly stated, Texaco is creating an Equality and Tolerance Task Force whose mission will be to undertake a comprehensive review of all our equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies. As the task force reviews suggestions for how we might strengthen our employment-related policies, we will consider language that will address the issue of sexual orientation in our Equal Opportunity Policy Statement.

Texaco recognizes the rights of all individuals to work in an environment free of discrimination, and is committed to a corporate culture fully supportive of opportunity and fairness for every employee.

Again, thank you for taking the time to share your concerns with us.

Sincerely,
s/ Richard F. Brenner
President, Human Resources Division

Comment by Henry Messer: This letter in effect says that TEXACO will do nothing about gays and lesbians. They hide in the usual rhetoric about the "Civil Rights Act of 1964" which says nothing about sexual orientation.

**Bay
Business
Services
Inc.**

Office: (616) 941-5748

ANDREW L. MITCHELL

Accounting & Tax Service

810-B South Garfield Ave • Traverse City, MI 49686

BODIES IN MOTION

One of the world's richest sources of information about the performing arts in prehistoric times is the painted decoration on the walls of caves in central India. Stick figures wearing elaborate, spikey headdresses sway to music, while others dance choreographed steps. Harpists with erect phalli play for dancers, some of whom are engaging in homosexual acts. Boys and girls jump about in ecstatic dance, then sit on beds entwined in each other's arms.

Rock art showing dance and musicianship is abundant in the state of Madhya Pradesh, particularly in the Vindhya Hills to the north of the Narmada River, and in the Mahadeo Hills to the south. Here, early artists created some of the most vivid and dramatic pictures of people in motion.

© 1997 by the Archaeological Institute of America

For additional information or photos, see:

<http://www.archaeology.org/9701/abstracts/india.html>

NEW AIDS CASES STABILIZING IN EU - STUDY

BRUSSELS (Reuter) - The number of new cases of AIDS in the European Union is stabilizing, figures released in late January show, but Spain, Italy and Portugal are still recording increases.

The European Commission said Wednesday that 17,778 new cases of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome were diagnosed in the 15-nation bloc in the first nine months of last year compared to 1995's total of 22,383.

The Commission said intravenous drug use was responsible for the greatest number of new cases, accounting for just under half. Male homosexuals or bisexuals accounted for 28 percent of new infections while 19 percent was by heterosexual contact.

The Commission said also that an increasing number of women were being infected with AIDS — 20 percent in 1995 compared to just 12 percent in 1986. Most of the women infected were intravenous drug users, the report said although some 32 percent had been infected through sex with drug-using partners.

The report added that Spain, Portugal and Italy were still showing increases in AIDS infections and this was attributed chiefly to drug use.



**Cross Country Ski
FORBUSH CORNER, INC.**

- Over 35 km of trails, machine set for both skating and striding from, beginner to expert.
- Just 1/4 mile east of I-75 at the Lewiston/Frederic exit (264)
- Performance ski shop, rentals and instruction
- Bunkhouse and two warming areas
- Weekend food service
- One kilometer night ski trail

Dave Forbush
(517) 348-5989

P.O. Box 327
4971 County Road 612
Frederic, Michigan 49733

HRC LAUNCHES FORUM ON AOL

In the Quest to deliver our message as widely as possible, the Human Rights Campaign has launched its own forum on America Online, which currently reaches 7 million subscribers.

The HRC Forum is housed in AOL's Politics Channel and sits along-side The White House Forum, The Capitol Connection, Congressional Quarterly, The

McLaughlin Group, the ACLU and other political forums. The HRC Forum provides access to our award-winning Online Action Center, which enables users to research issues and send messages to Congress; an ARC News and Issues area, a Membership and Marketplace mall, a Coming Out space, HRC Message Boards and an HRC Caucus Room. HRC will host evening chats on a variety of lesbian and gay and AIDS issues. The Caucus Room programming schedule is posted online.

AOL members can access the HRC Forum using <Keyword: HRC> or from the link in the Politics Channel.

HRC Hires Red Wing to Strengthen Field Operation

The Human Rights Campaign starts the new year with some new faces, and some familiar faces in new places. Longtime activist Donna Red Wing joins HRC as national field director, Winnie Stachelberg has been promoted to the new position of legislative director, and Kevin Layton has been named director of the political action committee and HRC's legislative counsel. Layton will work closely with Chai Feldblum, HRC's outside counsel.

These changes grew out of the departure of Daniel Zingale, HRC's political director, to become executive director of AIDS Action Council. "We were very sorry to see Daniel leave, but he will be a brilliant asset to AIDS Action," says HRC Executive Director Elizabeth Birch.

Red Wing, meanwhile, comes to HRC after three years with the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, where she helped create and manage its training programs in dealing with media, violence against gay men and lesbians and organizing against anti-gay initiatives. "We are thrilled to add Donna Red Wing's talent and vast experience to the staff of the Human Rights Campaign," Birch says. "Her abilities as an organizer, public speaker and committed activist will continue the process of building our movement, and the

HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN



Human Rights Campaign, from the grassroots up." Red Wing was instrumental in the defeat of Oregon's anti-gay ballot measure in 1992. As a result of her work, The Advocate named her its 1992 Woman of the Year. Simultaneously, her adversaries on the right proclaimed Red Wing "the most dangerous woman in Oregon."

Tipping the Balance of Power

HRC's first foray into state politics proved to be a success as we helped wrest the California Assembly from the hands of extremists. The Assembly, which was split 41-39 Republican to Democrat before Election Day, now promises to be a place where lesbians, gay men and fair-minded Californians are safer from anti-gay legislative attacks because of the shift to 43 Democrats and 37 Republicans. HRC's California Project turned out thousands of volunteers throughout the state to staff phone banks, participate in literature drops and get people out to vote on Election Day. Openly gay Assemblywomen Carole Migden of San Francisco and Sheila Kuehl of Santa Monica praised HRC for its efforts. "HRC's California Project played a pivotal role in reclaiming the California state Assembly from the extremist factions of the Republican Party," Migden said.

"We decided that since so much anti-gay federal legislation starts at the state level, that we could try a little preventative medicine," said Kevin Layton, HRC's PAC director and legislative counsel. "Plus, the extremists held a very slim majority in California."

Along with HRC's efforts to turn around the Assembly, HRC was also involved in many federal races in California. Senior Policy Advocate Julio Abreu worked with HRC members in the Santa Barbara area to elect fair-minded candidate Walter Capps, who defeated extremist Rep. Andrea Seastrand. HRC's political action committee supported many candidates for federal office in California including Loretta Sanchez, who defeated the most vocal anti-gay member of the House, Bob Dornan, and worked to re-elect Rep. Tom Campbell, a Republican who earned 89 percent on HRC's scorecard.

CHRYSLER PROTESTS BRING RESULT

-A report from Ron Woods

Due to the persistent efforts of the "Campaign For Equal Rights At Chrysler", Chrysler has added the words "sexual orientation" to the Corporate "Standards of Conduct". This most recent revision of the "Standards of Conduct" is dated January, 1997.

Also Chrysler has stated in a letter to fellow activist David F. Reckinger dated February 20, 1997 that diversity training is currently being evaluated and that such training would begin "as soon as possible". These steps and the "memo" from Chrysler CEO dated November 11, 1996, which for the first time in known history Chrysler uttered the words "sexual orientation", are positive steps in the right direction.

However, we maintain a healthy skepticism in light of the fact that all of this movement has only occurred during times of tremendous work, determination, perseverance and media attention exerted by the "Campaign For Equal Rights At Chrysler". Years of letter writing campaigns and repeated requests produced no movement whatsoever, all progress has been achieved only when overwhelming pressure has been exerted. For this reason the sincerity and depth of the commitment to equal rights must be drawn into question.

Chrysler (continued next page)

HEAR . . . HERE!

Our listening bar takes the guess work out of buying music by allowing you to preview any selection in our inventory.

ABCD'S

A Better Compact Disc Store.

430 East Front Street / Traverse City / 946-2112

Therefore we would appreciate everyone please doing all they can to continue to exert pressure by letter writing, phone calls and protests/pickets and media attention to the work that needs to be completed. We still must have:

- 1) A "memorandum of understanding" between Chrysler and the United Auto Workers (UAW)
- 2) Effective and substantial "Diversity Training" where we as employees have input.

We would like to thank everyone who has done anything to bring these changes about. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely, Ron G. Woods, Chairperson, Campaign For Equal Rights At Chrysler: MichRook@aol.com — 810-545-7699

DOMESTIC PARTNERS LAW SHOWING UP IN CONTRACTS

Some S.F. vendors quietly signing deals

The first contracts that bring companies into compliance with San Francisco's ground breaking domestic partners law are quietly being approved, even as fights with United Airlines and the Catholic church grab the headlines.

Thousands of companies are trying to figure out how to comply with the city's unique law that, starting in June, will require anyone doing business with the city to offer the same benefits to married and unmarried couples, including registered gay or lesbian couples. Some are already doing it by offering the benefits.

The Pier 23 Cafe's new long-term lease with the Port Commission has been approved, as has the Crystal Springs Golf Course operator's new contract with the Public Utilities Commission. Glide Memorial Church said it is creating domestic partners benefits. And in the proposed settlement of a dispute between the city and Tele-Communications Inc., San Francisco's cable franchisee, domestic partner benefits was not a contentious issue because TCI already offers such benefits across the country.

"The law is written to give companies flexibility," said Cynthia Goldstein of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. "In the first year or two, we don't expect all contracts to have everything in place, but we want to see movement toward putting them in place."

It's that position that has created controversy with United, the world's largest airline, and with the Roman Catholic archdiocese, which has asked for an exemption for Catholic Charities.

GLAAD NEWS

GAY & LESBIAN ALLIANCE AGAINST DEFAMATION, INC.

'Ellen' nominated for GLAAD Award

ABC sitcom "Ellen," which may be preparing to bring its title character out of the closet, is among the nominees for the eighth annual GLAAD Media Awards, presented by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. The awards will be presented at the media watchdog group's fund-raising banquets next month in Los Angeles, Washington and New York.

The other TV comedy nominees announced are "Friends," "Spin City," "Mad About You" and "The Larry Sanders Show." The drama series contenders are "Bedtime," "Chicago Hope" and "Relativity."

Nominees for outstanding wide-release movie are "The Birdcage," "Bound," "Flirting With Disaster," "Get on the Bus" and "Set It Off."

The top limited-release movies are "Antonia's Line," "Beautiful Thing," "Costa Brava," "French Twist," "It's My Party" and "Stonewall."

The daytime drama series nominees are "All My Children," "General Hospital," "One Life to Live" and "The City."

The GLAAD Awards recognize "balanced and accurate representations" of homosexuals and issues that affect them. The wide range of categories includes TV and newspaper journalism, advertising campaigns, music, interactive media and even comic books.

UNITED AIRLINES TO OFFER BENEFITS TO PARTNERS

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—United Airlines has two years to extend health and other benefits to its workers' same-sex partners, under an agreement reached with city leaders.

The accord, which the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved Monday, allows United's \$90 million expansion at San Francisco International Airport.

In June, the city will begin requiring all the companies with which it does business to offer spousal benefits to their workers unmarried partners.

The city had said it would not approve the airline's \$13.4 million, 25-year lease until it promised to comply with the new law. Under the agreement, United must develop a spousal benefits program in the lease's first 20 months.

"San Francisco has long been a leader in the fight for human civil rights and once again we are setting the standard," said Supervisor Leslie Katz, who is gay.



Barker Creek Nursery

LANDSCAPING AND GARDEN CENTER

Gordon Coy—Terry Bertrand
(616) 267-5972

7048 M-72 N.W., Williamsburg, MI 49690

Whitewater Landscaping & Lawn Care



ERNIE DAWSON
OWNER

Flowers
By Josie

212 MICHIGAN AVENUE
P.O. BOX 38
GRAYLING, MICHIGAN 49738
(517) 348-4006

Flowers • Gifts • Antiques



RESOURCES

STATE AND NATIONAL HOTLINES

Department of Justice Hotline (for reporting
Hate Crimes against gays and lesbians) 800-347-HATE
Michigan Wellness Networks 800-872-AIDS
Gay/Lesbian National Youth Hotline 800-347-TEEN

STATEWIDE SERVICES SOCIAL / POLITICAL / MEDIA

The Network: Lesbian and Gay Community Network of W. Michigan
909 Cherry St. S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49506 616-458-3511
Lavender Morning
P.O. Box 50729, Kalamazoo, MI 49005 616-685-6061
Kalamazoo Resource Center
P.O. Box 1532, Kalamazoo, MI 49005 616-345-7878
Affirmations Lesbian/Gay Community Center
Suite 110, 195 W. Nine Mile Rd.
Ferndale, MI 48220 810-398-7105
<http://www.webspace.com/~tcc/affirmations/index.htm>
Lansing Association of Human Rights
P.O. Box 18062, Lansing, MI 48826 517-332-3200
e-mail lahr@macatawa.org
Lesbian Connection
P.O. Box 811, East Lansing, MI 48826 517-371-5257
Triangle Foundation (Lesbian/Gay Foundation of Michigan)
19641 W. Seven Mile Rd., Detroit 48219 313-537-3323
..... Fax: 313-537-3379
e-mail trijeffm@aol.com
Between The Lines (newspaper/monthly) 810-615-7003
33528 Eight Mile, Ste. 185A3, Livonia, MI 48152 ... FAX 810-615-7018
e-mail pridepblis@aol.com
The Third Coast (magazine/monthly) 616-451-4903
1322 Hurd, SE, Grand Rapids 49506 FAX 616-451-0915
e-mail llrdCoasst@aol.com

NATIONAL SERVICE / SOCIAL / POLITICAL

P-FLAG: Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
1012 14th St. NW, Ste. 700, Washington, DC 20005 202-638-4200
GLAAD: Gay/Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation
80 Varick St., #3E, New York, NY 10013 212-807-1700
..... Fax: 212-807-1806
e-mail glaadnatl@aol.com
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force 202-332-6483
2320 17th St., NW, Washington, DC 20009 Fax: 202-332-0207
Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund 212-809-8585 x 205
120 Wall St., NY, NY 10005 Fax: 212-890-0055
ACLU Lesbian/Gay Rights Project
1370 Mission St., San Francisco, CA 94130 415-621-0674
HRC: Human Rights Campaign (National Coming Out Day)
1012 14th St. NS #607, Washington, DC 20005 202-628-4160
..... Fax: 202-347-5323
e-mail www@hrcusa.org
Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, Political Action Committee
1012 14th St. NW #707, Washington, DC 20005 202-842-7679

LOCAL SPIRITUAL:

Rev. Geraldine Colvin & Rev. David Florence
Unity Church, 3600 Five Mile, Traverse City 616-932-9587
Rev. Emmy Lou Belcher
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Grand Traverse
6726 Center Rd., Traverse City—Home: 938-9078 ... Office: 947-3117
Rev. Nancy Hayward, Circle of the Sacred Earth 616-223-7999

LOCAL COUNSELING:

Third Level Crisis Intervention, 616-922-4800
1022 E. Front St., TC, MI 49686 and 800-442-7315
Women's Resource Center 616-941-1210
Rodger Landvoy, PHD 616-929-1711
Susan Breuer PHD (Frankfort / Traverse City) 616-352-4261
Margo Million, ACSW 616-947-0511
David Blisk (Maple City) 616-228-5105
Joanna T. Lauber, MA, OTR, CHt 616-947-8842
Barbara Jones Smith, PHD 616-947-1444
Elizabeth Most, MSW, ACSW (Petoskey) 616-439-0656
William D. Gould, MA (Gladwin) 517-426-2351
David Rushlow, ACSW, Munson Medical Center 616-935-6385
Bay Area Counseling (Petoskey/Harbor Springs)
Margalo Bley, MSW, ACSW 616-348-3616
Daniel C. Doran, PHD, CSW 906-635-9263
Lois Martindale, Ph.D., Benzonia 616-882-5888
CDRS (a free substance abuse referral agency)
808-A S. Garfield, Traverse City 929-1315 or 800-686-0749

LOCAL SERVICE / SOCIAL / POLITICAL

Friends North (information line) 616-946-1804
Common Voices - F/N Rap Group Ed - 947-4697
..... Tom - 275-6127
Windfire Gay & Lesbian Youth Support Group—
Call Third Level for location & time 616-922-4800
or 800-442-7315
Side Traxx Nite Club, 520 Franklin St. off of 8th St. 616-935-1666
Traverse City Human Rights Commission, 400 Boardman . 616-922-4700
Gay Alcoholics Anonymous,
Grace Church, Washington at Boardman, TC John 616-922-0746
P-FLAG, Traverse City, POB 1705, Acme, MI 49610 . Cindy 616-271-5045
GLSTN (Gay/Lesbian/Straight Teachers Network)
PO Box 9, Traverse, MI 49685 616-943-8800
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