

THE EMPTY CLOSET

LOCAL NEWS BRIEFS

City Assessor denies tax exemption; GAGV goes back to court

The Rochester City Assessor's office announced on Dec. 31 that they have denied the property tax exemption requested by the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley (GAGV). The GAGV plans to re-submit their complaint to New York State Supreme Court Justice Andrew V. Siracuse, who commented favorably on the GAGV's case on Dec. 1, but declined to issue a ruling at that time.

GAGV President Paul Schieb said, "We feel that due to bias we are receiving unequal treatment under the law. We're asking people to write or phone Mayor Ryan and ask him for fair and equal treatment for the Gay Alliance."

The GAGV hopes to submit one or both of its motions on Feb. 18, Judge Siracuse's first available motion date in 1993. The first motion would be to amend the original complaint, and the second motion would be that the City Assessor's decision be overturned, and that the GAGV, like similar non-profit organizations in this city, and like the Gay and Lesbian Center in New York City, be allowed property tax exemption.

Those wishing to contact the Mayor may call his office at 428-7000, or write to him at 30 Church St., City Hall, Rochester N.Y. 14614.

Bid from the heart on Valentine's Day at the Top of the Plaza

Valentine's Day will be celebrated again this year by "A Bid From the Heart," the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley (GAGV)'s annual auction, which will take place at the Top of the Plaza, scene of an early GAGV direct action against homophobia.

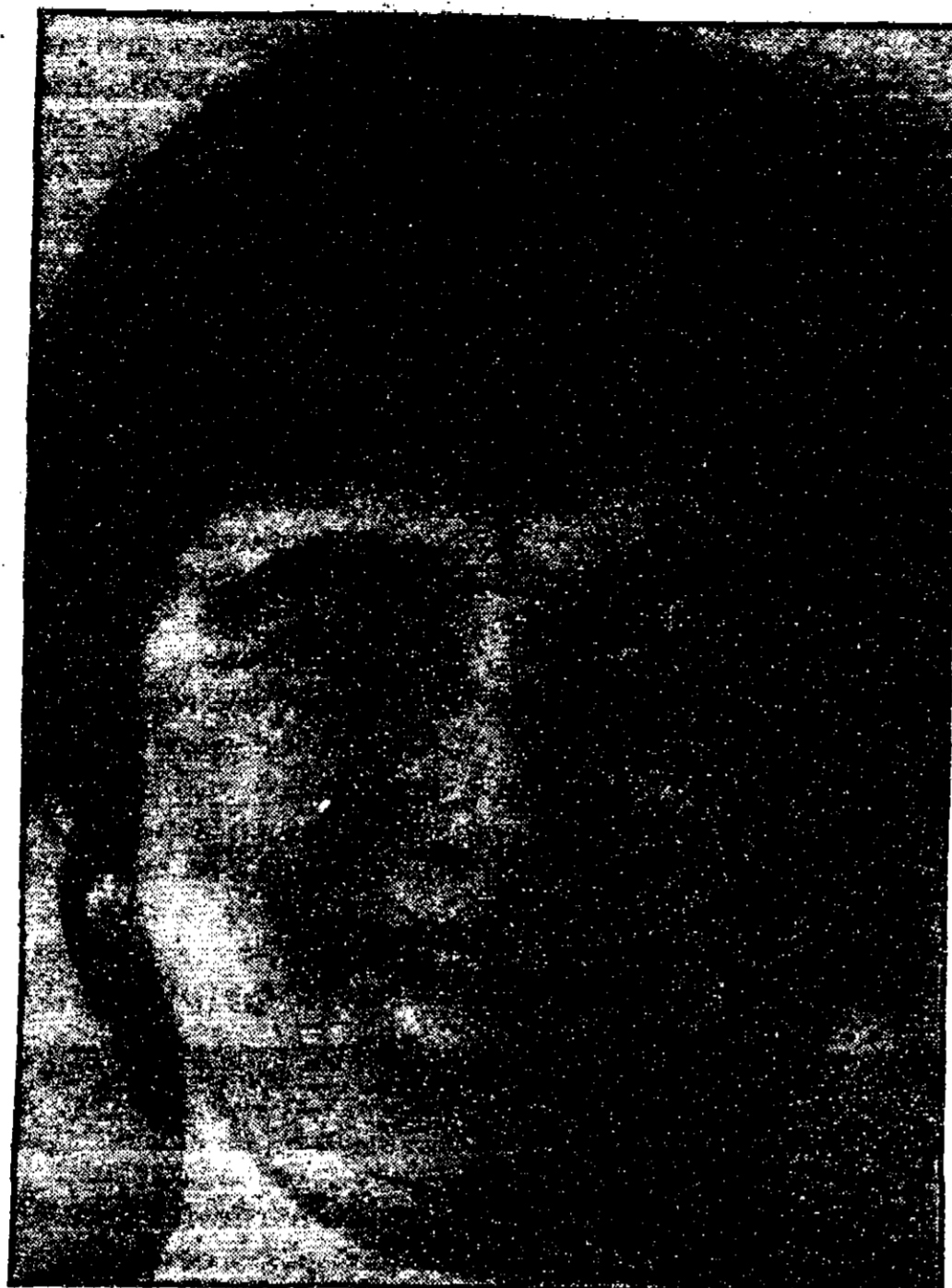
Over 15 years ago, GAGV members attended a heterosexual dance there; at a signal, they switched to same-sex partners, making a point about gay and lesbian visibility and about homophobia.

This Feb. 14, there will be no need for such an action as the GAGV presents its annual fundraising auction, "A Bid From the Heart," from 1 to 5 p.m.

"Our goal this year is \$20,000," said organizer Evelyn Bailey. She said that art and antiques will feature heavily among the items available. Proceeds will go to the maintenance of the Gay Alliance Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave., and to support the many projects sponsored by the GAGV, from the Gay Source hotline to Rochester's Gay Summer Theater.

Tickets are available at AIDS Rochester, Village Green, Rochester Custom Leathers, Partridge, Silkwood and Paul's Grocery.

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ON A SPECIAL MISSION: Rev. Jamie Spahr will travel the country as an evangelist for the acceptance of gay and lesbian clergy within the Presbyterian Church. Photo by Doug Meszler.

Spahr may serve as evangelist; changes proposed in Presbyterian anti-gay policy

By Susan Jordan

Downtown United Presbyterian Church (DUPC) and two other More Light churches in the Presbytery of the Genesee Valley have taken a new tack in their continuing struggle to change the anti-gay-clergy policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Reverend Jane Spahr may be commissioned as an evangelist with a mission not only to DUPC's congregation, but to the entire denomination. Rev. Spahr would travel around the country in support of a proposal from two local Presbyterian churches that the national church end its prohibition of gay and lesbian pastors. The proposal will be presented to the General Assembly, the governing body of the church, in June.

The Third Presbyterian Church and Calvary St. Andrews Church submitted the proposal to the Presbytery of the Genesee Valley on Jan. 30.

DUPC elder Martha B. Brown said that Spahr's work as an evangelist will differ significantly from what she would have done as a co-pastor at DUPC. "When a person is a pastor," Brown said, "she is directly connected to a particular church and congregation and fulfills the tasks of a minister in the traditional way. But in our denomination, there are other positions that a person can fill, such as being a chaplain in a hospital, or serving as a presbytery or other administrative official.

"Ministers can play a variety of roles," Brown said, "but they all have to have the OK of their home denomination or presbytery. Jamie Spahr is a member in good standing of the Presbytery of the Redwoods, and as such has a ministry to gay and lesbian people, especially people with AIDS, at Spectrum in San Anselmo,

Calif. The Church is trying to tell her she can't be a minister at DUPC or anywhere.

"So what we're proposing, since they've raised the issue, is to raise the stakes, to go forward full blast and directly address the constitutional problem. We want to eliminate the 'definitive guidance' of 1978 (which bans gay and lesbian clergy.) This is what the judges looked at when they rejected Janie. They said she's ineligible because of the 1978 ruling. They also eliminated the grandfather clause, which said that the 1978 ruling applied only to those ordained after 1978. That is a matter of grave concern."

Brown continued, "We've asked Janie to remain in the Presbytery of the Redwoods and undertake a special mission for DUPC and the *entire* denomination. She will travel at the invitation of others to churches and presbyteries throughout our denomination. She'll be working full time, getting on planes and speaking to supporters all over the country to help get votes to eliminate the restriction.

"We'll pay for it. We'll be sending out a mailing soon to start fundraising. Remember we raised \$30,000 for the judicial case, which was defeated. This will be a separate project."

If the General Assembly votes to change or eliminate the "definitive guidance" in June, Spahr will be free to come to Rochester as a DUPC co-pastor. If the Assembly rejects the proposal, DUPC and the More Light churches will then develop another plan of action.

When asked if Janie's General Assembly will be any more likely than the judges in Dallas last November to vote in favor of removing the anti-gay policy, Brown said, "Yes. It was not the body of the church who voted (against Spahr.) It

was the Permanent Judicial Commission, a panel of judges, like the Supreme Court. In June, those who will vote will be representatives of different presbyteries, the unit of our functioning. So it will be a very different situation. At the end, we can get back to our real business of trying to help each other."

Brown said that DUPC will send an official letter of protest about the Permanent Judicial Commission decision to the General Assembly.

Brown stated that removal of the 1978 rule would have a far-reaching effect on the church, not only in acceptance of gay clergy, but also in the freedom of local churches and presbyteries to make their own decisions. "One of the important aspects of the conflict has been that

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EDITORIAL

The new crime of "correctness"

By Susan Jordan

When I was new to radical feminist organizing (back in the pre-Cambrian era when dinosaurs roamed the earth) my sister conspirators and I used to joke about "p.c." and "p.i."

We thought of "politically correct" types as humorless, small-minded women who got self-righteous thrills by taking a rigid, party-line view of issues, and trashing women who had different opinions and were therefore "politically incorrect." We were "p.i. and proud," we joked.

Over a dozen years later we've seen some strange developments. The feminist analysis of the links between homophobia, sexism, racism, classism and the other "isms" has gone from being a marginal phenomenon to being a national preoccupation, especially among the young. The mainstream media tells us that these issues are being hotly discussed again on college campuses and elsewhere.

But while inflexibly "p.c." women and men can still be a big pain in the neck,

the term has been adopted and typically twisted by the right wing, which uses it to silence the oppressed.

Inapost-Reagan America which prefers Rush Limbaugh to Whoopi Goldberg, we're told it's no longer necessary to think about the oppression of gays by straights, women by men, people of color by whites, workers by bosses, the disabled by the able-bodied, the Third and Fourth Worlds by multinational corporations...forget all that stuff. Those difficult, disturbing issues are all "p.c." and can therefore be dismissed without further ado, especially by white, owning-class, able-bodied heterosexual males.

The other day I even read about some one who was quoted as saying, "It may be p.c. — but I really think that woman was discriminated against because she is female."

Interesting, I thought. Now any criticism of the status quo has to be prefaced by a disclaimer that one is not trying to be politically correct.

Then on Jan. 10 I read that Donna E. Shalala, now head of the Department of Health and Human Services (and proposing stepped-up war on AIDS to make up for the time lost due to what she calls "silence and bigotry") was "under fire for being too correct." This was a week or so after I read that she was "under fire" for the crime of possibly being a lesbian (and let's hope she is, although as Gloria Steinem pointed out long ago, lesbian-baiting is a very effective way of silencing heterosexual feminists.)

It seems that Shalala supported a hate speech code on her campus at the University of Wisconsin, that banned epithets or symbols which demean others because of race, gender, ancestry, age, disability or sexual preference. The ACLU challenged the code as a restraint on free speech and a federal district court overturned it in 1991.

Shalala is obviously a potential "p.c." tyrant: gay-bashers, racists, woman-haters and the rest won't be as safe as they should be under her reign of terror. Of

course, bigots have every right to demean others, even when it leads to violence against minorities, who (according to the right wing) don't deserve "special rights" like protection from discrimination and violent attack.

It's not the bigots who are the problem, you see, it's their victims, who insist on being so annoyingly correct in drawing attention to injustice. The freedom to be incorrect is the American Way — except for Reagan/Bush political and judicial appointees of the last 12 years, who have had to pass the religious right's litmus test for its own brand of political correctness.

That doesn't count, however, because the new crime of "correctness" is only an issue for African Americans, Native Americans, Asians, Hispanics, gays and lesbians, women....

Life is full of surprises. Here it is 1993 and it seems I'm "p.c." whether I want to be or not.



LETTERS

Goodbye and thanks from Dr. Steve Scheibel to the community

To the Editor:

I would like to take this time to express my thanks to the Rochester community, and specifically the gay community, for its support of Community Health Network, Inc. and my participation as a physician at its facility.

After living in Rochester for the past seven years, I have decided to move to the west coast for personal reasons. My experience in working the HIV field has been rewarding to me as a caretaker of those infected with HIV, but also served to usher me through a period of personal growth. Developing relationships with patients is a complex and intimate process, especially if you happen to be gay yourself. The typical doctor-patient relationship quickly evolves into close friendships with a great deal of emotional involvement.

It has been this feeling that spurred on my involvement with CHN — the idea that you could provide aggressive and progressive medical care in a nurturing environment. Admittedly, I have worked with patients who, like myself, anticipated more creative medical care to slow down the

deterioration of the immune system secondary to HIV. Supported by the ACT-UP movement and the John James Newsletter, patients and their physicians have been offered access to lifesaving medications.

The results of several recent studies confirm the benefit of some of these treatments, such as the early intervention with medication such as AZT and ddI; the use of combination anti-retrovirals (AZT/ddCandAZT/ddI); and the use of medications to prevent opportunistic infections. It has been a miracle to see people's lives extended from eight to 12 months without treatment to two-to-six years with treatment.

Newer studies are examining the use of immunomodulation in combination with anti-retroviral therapy to further arrest the replication of HIV. The use of AZT and alpha-interferon and HIV vaccine therapy may maintain the use of one's own immunosurveillance to maintain very low activity of HIV. This will surely be of clinical benefit.

As a community it is important to consider that HIV infection is not necessarily a death sentence. Recent analysis of the San Francisco cohort study shows that about 35 percent of those gay men who are HIV infected remain

asymptomatic for longer than 14 years. This newer information places doubts on the claims of some scientists that HIV is a uniformly fatal illness. This raises the possibility that there are strains of HIV which are nonpathogenic, and although infection may occur, immune deterioration may not follow. This creates the likelihood that molecular genetics may be the ultimate answer to the treatment of HIV infection through the creation of replicative mutations in HIV which, although infecting an immune cell, will be unable to destroy it.

I think that it is important to state that nobody wants this disease to continue or be a form of genocide. I certainly would have liked to have this disease cured a long time ago while I buzz around on my motorcycle going from beach to beach. The sadder aspect of this disease is the realization that some do die of HIV infection, and my role of a healer changes from recommendation for medication to instituting comfort care measures and consoling patients, lovers, families about the death process.

This has spurred my interest in the death process and rituals surrounding the upliftment of the soul and its progression into the light when the physical body dies. For me a sense of spirituality has been the only comfort in emotionally deal-

ing with the tragedy of young death — without this I was overwhelmed with feelings of anger, sadness, loss and resentment. Naturally, to give these feelings to a greater power than me such as the God concept has allowed me to feel passion, joy and love rather than numbness. This acknowledgement of this loving higher power has transformed my idea of disease — a state which affects our physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and soul bodies — not just a physical condition.

Finally, again I wish to thank the Rochester community for its support of CHN through generous donations, supplies and volunteers. Personally, I thank the staff of CHN for their commitment to providing comprehensive health care and especially to my friend Bill Valenti, M.D., for his steadfastness in the conception and "birthing" of CHN. I especially want to thank my patients, both alive and those who have passed into Spirit, for the glimpse into their lives — their values, comments, appreciation and criticism — which have assisted me into becoming a better healer. I certainly wish the continued health of my patients and will think of them often as I enter into another phase of my life and career.

Sincerely,
Steven F. Scheibel, M.D.

LOCAL & STATE NEWS

NEWSBRIEFS continued from p. 1

Albany passes gay rights measure

The city of Albany passed a human rights bill including protection for gays and lesbians on Dec. 14.

Openly gay Alderman Keith St. John sponsored the bill, which was passed by the city's Common Council by a vote of eight to six. The bill, which was a source of controversy for the past five years, adds the words "sexual orientation" to a list of protected groups.

The bill exempts religious groups, but makes it otherwise illegal to discriminate against gay men and lesbians in employment, housing or public places. It also gives the Equal Employment Opportunity office in Albany wider powers to investigate and punish cases of homophobic discrimination.

The measure also bans discrimination based on race, religion, color, national origin, gender, marital status, age or disability. The bill has been passed to Mayor Thomas M. Whelan III, who has said that he will sign it.

Keith St. John is the first openly gay Black elected official in the nation.

ESPA lobbyist to talk on prospects for state gay rights legislation

The Rochester Lesbian and Gay Political Caucus will sponsor a forum on gay and lesbian civil rights in New York State on Feb. 1 at 7 p.m., at the First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd.

Shem Salvione, lobbyist for the Empire State Pride Agenda, will discuss the current state of civil rights legislation in the New York State Assembly, why the chances for passage this year look promising, and how people in this area can pressure their legislators to support gay rights.

Similar forums have already taken place in Albany, Utica and Syracuse, and others are scheduled this month for Buffalo, Ithaca and Binghamton.

GAGV accepting board nominations

The nominating committee of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley (GAGV) is currently accepting nominations by petition for the Alliance board. New board members and officers will be elected in April, and five seats for representatives of community groups are also open.

Individuals and groups wishing to sit on the GAGV board should write opinions and have it signed by 10 members in

good standing of the GAGV. Petitions should be sent to Nominating Committee, GAGV, 179 Atlantic Ave., Rochester N.Y. 14607-1255, by April 1.

GAGV seeks to fill two part time positions

The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley (GAGV) has announced that it is seeking to fill two positions within the organization.

The operations manager or development director position would be part time, focusing on monitoring and proposing improvements to GAGV operations. Duties would include maintaining communications with local, state and national gay organizations; providing support for GAGV Board committees and ad hoc programs; updating GAGV records, researching and writing grant proposals, and generally promoting and assisting the GAGV and its projects.

The post of facilities manager would also be a part time position, entailing such duties as keeping the building open from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. on weeknights, maintaining the appearance of the building, scheduling use of the available meeting space, and performing other clerical and maintenance tasks.

For more information, read the Help Wanted section of the classified advertisements, or call 244-8640 and leave a message for the personnel committee. Resumes should be sent to the Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave., Rochester N.Y. 14607-1255.

AGR grants go to GAGV, Men's Chorus

Two local gay and lesbian organizations have received grants for arts projects from Arts for Greater Rochester's decentralization fund.

The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley was awarded \$500 for the 1993 Rochester Gay Summer Theater season, which may feature productions of *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Empty*, *Cloud Nine*, *Victor/Victoria*, *M. Butterfly*, and *Making Love*.

The Rochester Gay Men's Chorus received \$1000 for presentation of the "Alto Rhapsody" by Brahms at their 10th anniversary concert on May 1, 1993.

Women's Day events to include workshops

International Women's Day 1993 will be observed in Rochester on March 6, with a day of workshops and an evening event tentatively set for the Damon Center, the downtown site of Monroe Community College, in the Sibley Building.

This year's theme is "Women's Creative Action." The organizers note that the

theme includes women in the arts and women's individual and collective creative responses to oppression in all its forms.

Volunteers are needed to help plan and present IWD events. The February planning meetings will be on Feb. 2 and Feb. 16 at 7 p.m. at the YWCA, 175 N. Clinton Ave. All women are welcome to attend. For information call Marsha Peone, 247-1034, or Liz Alpert, 473-7446.

Give to community through United Way donor option plan

The United Way Campaign will soon be getting underway, and gay, lesbian and bisexual people who are approached at work to make a donation can once again make sure that their money goes to the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley.

The donor option plan ensures that you can make a confidential donation which will continue services to the gay community of Rochester, including the Gay Alliance Community Center, Gay

Source hotline, Empty Closet newspaper, speakers bureau, community library, liaison with the Rochester police department and much more.

If you participate in your company's United Way payroll deduction plan, you can request a donor option form from the United Way solicitor, or by calling 454-2770. You then fill out the option form, listing "GAGV" and its agency identification number, 1135. You can then either return the form to your employer, or mail it yourself to the United Way, 55 St. Paul St., Rochester N.Y. 14604, to ensure confidentiality.

Everyone who makes a minimum contribution of \$25 will receive a free one-year single membership in the GAGV, including a year's subscription to the Empty Closet.

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What can't you live without? It's probably at the auction

By Evelyn Bailey

The Auction Committee is very excited about the quality and quantity of donations for "A Bid From the Heart" on Feb. 14 at the Top of the Plaza.

As of Jan. 20, we had already received articles from Rochester decorators Arthur Vituch, Christopher Leighton, and Fran Speer; works of art from Achille Forgione, Susan Carter, Eric Belmann, Susan Kost, Tom Day, Susan Soleil, Mark Groaning, Rene and Pepe Silversmiths, Charlotte Barnard, and Kristen Malone.

Original works of art have been donated from the collections of Light Impressions, Oxford Gallery, Nan Miller Gallery, Ramone Santiago Studio, Dawson Gallery, Warren Phillips Fine Art and the personal collections of the following individuals: Earl Kage, Bill Valenti, Claire Parker, John Dash and Arnie Pegish, Dan Meyers, John Strand, Eve Elzenga, Ron Swasman, Bob Seltenreich, Evelyn Bailey, Walter Hickey, Joe Bonvissuto and Tom Hackett, Jessie Lucas, Tim Mains and others.

The committee has also obtained the following exciting pieces of furniture: Art Deco dresser and matching mirror, Victorian sofa, bentwood rocker, beveled glass wall mirror, three original seats from the Rochester Community Players Playhouse, and a piece from Weird Furniture.

We know you will want to bear the Top of the Plaza from 1 to 5 p.m. to BID OFTEN, socialize, BID AGAIN, drink champagne and enjoy the wonderful food prepared by the Top of the Plaza. The Auction Committee will be there to greet you, their work will be done; let the fun begin!



▼ The Gay Source ▼

Need information, referrals, or just someone to listen? Call the Gay Alliance peer facilitators Hotline! 244-8640 Mon-Thurs: 6-9:30 pm Fri: 7:30-9:30 pm

The Empty Closet

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The Empty Closet is published 11 times a year (December and January combined) by the Empty Closet Press for the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Inc. Approximately 4500 copies of each issue are distributed during the first week of the month, some by mail in a plain sealed envelope. The publication of the name or photograph of any person or organization in articles is not an indication of the sexual or affectional orientation of that person or the members of that organization.

For publication, submit news items, letters, notices, posters, photographs or art by mail or in person to the Empty Closet office by the 15th of the month (photos and camera ready art by the 20th). Design services for non-camera ready art are available for a fee.

For further information, please write to the Empty Closet, 179 Atlantic Ave., Rochester, NY 14607-1255, or call (716) 244-9030.

The Empty Closet is the official publication of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Inc., as stated in the bylaws of that organization. Its purpose is to inform the Rochester gay community about local and national gay-related news and events; to provide a forum for ideas and creative work from the local gay community; to help promote leadership within the community; and to be a part of a national network of lesbian and gay publications that exchange ideas and seek to educate.

Part of our purpose is to maintain a middle position with respect to the main community. We must be careful to present all viewpoints in a way that does not alienate the vast majority of all — young, old, young and old, and those from various walks of life. Advertising policy: The Empty Closet does not print advertisements that contain nude drawings or photographs.

no does it print advertising that states that the person pictured in the ad is for sale, or that you will "get" that particular person if you patronize the establishment advertised.

Advertisements that are explicitly racist, sexist, agnostic or homophobic will be refused; advertisements from organizations that are racist, sexist, agnostic or anti-gay will also be refused.

The opinions of columnists, editorial writers and other contributing writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitude of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley or the Empty Closet. No living person's HIV status will be published without written or typed permission from that person.

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Judge stays Colorado's anti-gay measure; boycott still in effect

Colorado's Amendment 2, which would have permanently banned laws protecting gays from discrimination, has been blocked by a state judge until constitutional questions are resolved.

District Judge Jeffrey Bayless blocked the Amendment in time to keep it from taking effect on Jan. 16.

"This is not a victory. This is a Bandaid," said Jan Williams of Boycott Colorado. She said that the boycott will continue.

A group of individuals, including openly lesbian tennis star Martina Navratilova, and three Colorado cities, have sued the state of Colorado in a challenge to the legality of Amendment 2, which permanently bans any form of civil rights protection for gays and lesbians, and repeals the measures already protecting gays in Aspen, Denver and Boulder. The Amendment was passed by 53.4 percent of Colorado voters.

The lawsuit claims that the Amendment violates both the U.S. and Colorado constitutions, and establishes a "right to discriminate" against gays, lesbians and bisexuals.

The suit also claims that the Amendment violates the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, would inhibit free speech, limit advocacy and force people to "adhere to a single, state-approved belief respecting gay, lesbian or bisexual orientation."

"Bigots across the nation are watching closely," said attorney Mary Celeste of the

Colorado Legal Initiatives Project, a group assisting the lawsuit. "They will use it (Amendment 2) as a model to condone discrimination everywhere. This case has national significance."

The other plaintiffs in the lawsuit include an ordained minister who has never before publicly acknowledged being a lesbian, and the cities of Denver, Aspen and Boulder. Representing the plaintiffs are the ACLU of Colorado, the national ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights Project, the Colorado Legal Initiatives Project, and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund.

A boycott of Colorado has been gathering strength. Lesbian comedian and promoter Robin Tyler has canceled her tour and the events she planned in conjunction with Aspen Gay Ski Week. Gay entrepreneurs in Colorado are criticizing the boycott as harmful to their businesses, but Tyler said that monetary loss is "not enough of an excuse" to rule out a boycott.

"The cost is our rights and the penalty is our freedom," she said, adding that if Colorado does not suffer enormous economic penalties, anti-gay forces will begin Amendment 2 initiatives in other states.

Some celebrities who live or vacation in Aspen have also said they will support the boycott. Barbra Streisand announced on Dec. 11 that she will no longer vacation there. "If that law were passed against Jews or people of color," she said, "the whole country would be outraged and nobody would question organizing a boycott of that state."

The cities of Philadelphia, New York,

San Francisco, Boston, Seattle, Austin, Chicago and Atlanta have joined the boycott, prohibiting official business travel for city employees to Colorado. Washington D.C. is expected to follow their example soon. The U.S. Conference of Mayors, meeting in Washington D.C. on Dec. 17, voted not to hold its annual meeting in June 1993 in Colorado Springs, as previously planned.

The Coalition of Labor Union Women has decided to cancel its plans to hold its convention in Denver, and the National Educational Association also decided not to sponsor a November 1993 meeting in the state. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Atlanta, the civil rights organization founded by Martin Luther King, has also joined the boycott.

Businesses too are beginning to cooperate. XChange Computers and the Ziff-Davis Publishing Co. have both changed plans to consider relocating in the state. The boycott has cost about \$10 million statewide so far, according to Ken Parks, spokesperson for the Greater Denver Chamber of Commerce.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Anti-Violence Project says that the number of bias incidents against gays has increased dramatically since the passage of Amendment 2, from 89 in 1991 to 166 in 1992. Of the 1992 incidents, 45 occurred in November.

The effects of the Amendment include endangering gay prisoners, who would no longer be segregated for their own protection. Denver Safety Manager John Simonet testified Jan. 12 that gay inmates in the Denver jail have had the

option of being kept away from homophobic prisoners, but Amendment 2 "will put a number of people at risk."

The passage of the Amendment has resulted in at least one suicide. The note left by Marty Wayne Booker, a 26-year-old person with AIDS, read, "I refuse to live in a state where a few people can, at will, make my life a living hell. Thanks to CVF (Colorado for Family Values, the hate group which sponsored the Amendment), hell was delivered to my very front door."

Booker added, "I suppose I'm weak. But it took a lot of courage to get out before I would have to live through the 'Auschwitz' CVF has in mind for people like me I love you all. I'm sorry my crime in life was LOVE — albeit to the same gender."

Financial contributions to the legal battle against Amendment 2 may be sent to Colorado Legal Initiatives Project (CLIP), P.O. Box 44447, Denver CO 80201. To thank Colorado Governor Roy Romer for his support of the gay community in opposition to the Amendment, write Gov. Roy Romer, 136 State Capitol, Denver CO 80203.

If you plan to join the boycott against traveling to or spending money in Colorado, you can write to the following organizations (although Denver and Boulder voted against the Amendment, these organizations need to know that you will not be spending money anywhere in the state until the Amendment is repealed): Denver Chamber of Commerce, 1301 Walton, Denver CO 80204; Colorado

NEWSFRONTS

Tourism Board, 1625 Broadway, Suite 1700, Denver CO 80202; Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce, PO Denver B, Colorado Springs CO 80901; Boulder Chamber of Commerce, 1001 Canyon Blvd., Boulder CO 80302; Estes Park Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 3050, Estes Park CO 80517.

Letters stating your support of the boycott should be sent to The Editor, Deaver Post, P.O. Box 1709, Deaver CO 80201.

Kristina Campbell and Karen Ocarin, *The Washington Blade*; *Outfront*; *Quest*; John Sanko, *Rocky Mountain News*, *The Denver Post*; ACLU

FDA approves drug for eating problems linked to AIDS

The Food and Drug Administration has approved the use of a drug which treats the anorexia and other eating problems which often affect people with AIDS.

The drug is dronabinol, which is marketed under the name Marinol by Roxane Laboratories. It has been used to treat nausea and vomiting due to chemotherapy, and can be obtained with a doctor's prescription.

The manufacturer says that Marinol may prevent side effects such as drowsiness, dizziness and loss of thinking. It is meant to help alleviate the symptoms of people with AIDS, which in turn will improve their resistance to opportunistic infections.

Associated Press

Paul Monette's autobiography wins National Book Award

Gay author Paul Monette has won the National Book Award for non-fiction for 1992.

Monette's autobiography *Becoming a Man: Half a Life Story* beat out finalists including James Gleick's *Genius: The Life and Science of Richard Feynman*, David McCullough's *Tomlinson*, Gary Wills' *Lincoln as Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America*, and Edward L. Ayres' *The Promise of the New South*.

Monette's book describes his struggle to come to terms with and celebrate his gay identity.

Cambridge mayor reveals "best known secret": gay identity

The mayor of Cambridge, Mass., a suburb of Boston, announced on Dec. 11 that he is gay, which he said was Cambridge's "best known secret."

Kenneth Reeves said that his sexual orientation has not received attention because the media has overlooked it.

"No one in the press ever asked me if I was gay," he said in an interview with the *Washington Blade*. Reeves said that he had not brought up the issue himself because, as an African American, it was not culturally appropriate.

"The traditions of African Americans who are gay is not to wear signs, but to just sort of conduct their lives as they see

fit," Reeves said. "There is, however, an increased sensitivity, and I think I may reflect that — that in 1992, that (approach) might not suffice in all ways."

When Reeves was given an award from the Greater Boston Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance, which was designated for "friends of the community," he said that the felicitations upon to be open about his identity. At the end of his speech, he said, "I am not an honorary homosexual. I am a real homosexual."

Reeves is thought to be the nation's first openly gay African American mayor (Albany Alderman Keith St. John is the first openly gay Black elected official). Cambridge is the largest American city with an openly gay mayor.

Reeves said he has received a large response to his announcement, most of it supportive. "My experience is simply that the earth has not opened up beneath me," he said. "The people who have loved and valued me as a person do so even more, I guess."

Reeves, originally from Detroit, first came to Cambridge to attend Harvard University. He is now a lawyer and has been a member of the city council since 1989. He was elected mayor by the council in January 1992; his term will expire in 1994.

Kristina Campbell, *The Washington Blade*

Clinton to act soon on reversing military ban

President Bill Clinton will apparently act on his campaign promise to quickly

overturn the Pentagon's longtime ban on gays and lesbians serving in the Armed Forces.

Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass), who has been consulted about the change in policy by the Clinton administration, said that Clinton would issue an order directing the services to stop questioning recruits about their sexual orientation, and to end the dishonorable discharges of those members of the service who admit or are found to be gay or lesbian.

"Immediately the policy of kicking people out of the military because they are gay will be out," Frank said.

During the White House open reception following the inauguration, some gay men and lesbians in the receiving line told Clinton that they hoped he will keep his promise.

Associated Press

Rudolf Nureyev dies of AIDS at 54

Rudolf Nureyev, one of the great dancers of the 20th century, died of AIDS on Jan. 6 at a hospital near Paris, France.

Nureyev became a superstar after defecting from the former Soviet Union in 1961. He was especially famous for partnership with ballerina Dame Margot Fonteyn, and he established male dancers as virile and sexy.

This was ironic because Nureyev, according to friends, was gay. He was preceded in death by his great love, Danish dancer Erik Bruhn.

Aras van Herturn, *Washington Blade*

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THANK YOU

SPAHR continued from p. 1

in the past, presbyteries have always chosen ministers. We are the Presbyterian Church; we run ourselves within the presbytery, and we are shocked to be interfered with in this way. So we re-affirm the authority of the regional presbytery."

When asked if the Permanent Judicial Commission judges had all been middle-aged, presumably conservative white men, Brown said, "Yes. It's fine with me to have that brought to people's attention. This is a 'teachable moment,' because Jane is so qualified for the position, and this is helping many people start to see things differently, and to question the anti-gay policy."

Brown added, "Our advisors tell us that this decision (against the call to Spahr) is illegal and improper. There is a lot of strong feeling about that across the country, and serious organizing going on through a computer network called Presbynet."

Rumor since the November rejection of the Spahr appeal had suggested that DUPC might formally defy the ruling by hiring Spahr as a co-pastor. Brown observed that in that case, the national church could remove the present pastors and session from DUPC and put a conservative congregation and leadership in their place. Gay elders would be especially at risk. "There could be hearings like that called for Janie Spahr," Brown said. "The church ordained us and can remove us, and all the pastors."

The Reverend John Fife, moderator of the General Assembly, is a supporter of

DUPC and Janie Spahr. He spoke at DUPC on Jan. 12, making it clear that he feels that the church can and should change its policy.

"I think that the possibility of that change being approved by the upcoming General Assembly is very good," Fife said. "It will be an extremely close vote. To accomplish that is going to take hard work."

Fife said that he will be advocating for the change when he speaks to congregations, presbyteries and church leaders around the country. He said that although he feels the Permanent Judicial Commission erred in voting against Spahr, others disagree and will continue to resist change.

Fife will return to Rochester on March 6, at which time Janie Spahr will be formally commissioned as an evangelist. March 6 was to have been the date of her installation as a co-pastor at DUPC.

Janie Spahr told the Empty Chair, "Spectrum (Spahr's current agency) would be hiring me and would be the fiscal agent, funded by DUPC. If the Spectrum board approves, I would end at Spectrum by the end of February, and begin the post as evangelist on March 1, with the commission service on March 6."

At presstime the Spectrum board was about to take a formal vote on the issue.

"I'm excited about traveling to churches and talking about the wonder of God's diversity," Spahr said, "and about persuading the Presbyterian Church to change its policy...so all may freely serve."



NTID conference celebrates deaf gay and lesbian community with week of events, guest speaker

By Manuel Rivera

The National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) hosted a week full of events to celebrate gayness in the deaf community between Jan. 11-16.

The event featured guest speaker Philip C. Rubin, the current Mr. Deaf International Leather, and the acting president of the Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf. Rubin is also the director of the Deaf Gay & Lesbian Center in San Francisco and a former student of RIT.

Known as the world's largest technical college for the hearing impaired, NTID is home to approximately 1,100 students in a campus composed of more than 13,000. The students attending NTID come from all regions of the country, as well as from Canada and Europe.

The week-long event was the first of its kind on the RIT campus. It began with a film titled *Deaf and Gay Cultures: Supported or Oppressed?*, presented in the college of Liberal Arts on Jan. 11. The film, a documentary on the gay community past and present, aimed at emphasizing the power in "numbers," as well as self pride. The film also spoke about the obstacles and consequences faced by leaders of the past who put their lives on the line for their beliefs.

The leaders depicted in the film included Harvey Milk, the first openly gay

member of the Board of Supervisors in San Francisco, who was assassinated in 1978 by Dan White, along with San Francisco Mayor George Moscone. Elaine Noble, the first openly lesbian candidate to be elected to a state legislature (in 1975), along with Cleve Jones, founder of the Names Project Quilt, were also mentioned in the film. Jones started the Names Project as part of an effort to provide family and friends of AIDS victims, including himself, with the opportunity to have their loved ones remembered. Jones' lover was a victim of AIDS.

After the two hour film, Rubin led a discussion with the predominantly deaf audience. He also talked about his personal experiences in order to provide advice to students who complained that life at home when you're gay and deaf is not easy.

Rubin was a third grader when he learned what it is like to be misunderstood. His mom took him to a psychologist to find out what she might need to do if her son was gay.

"The psychologist told her that I might be going through a phase," Rubin said. "Of course during that time of the '50s and '60s they didn't know a whole lot about gay and lesbian people so there was a lot of misunderstanding." It took

Rubin's mom seven years to comprehend and accept his sexuality. She became good friends with his lover, treating him as her own son.

The following day of the mini-conference included a panel discussion on everything from coming out to dealing with situations in the work place. Shelia Dony, a faculty member in the Department of Human Development at NTID and one of the panelists in the discussion, felt that the workshop was a complete success.

"It went wonderfully," she said, "the panel was well received and there were no hostile questions even though there were obvious straight people in the crowd. It's very wonderful now (the environment at RIT/NTID) compared to what it used to be back 15 years ago when I first started here."

However, faculty members who attended events like *Sensitivity in The Workplace*, acknowledged that a greater acceptance and awareness needs to be obtained. One member of Bi-Gala (the gay and lesbian student organization on campus) commented that the club is continuously having problems in their efforts to reach out to other gay students. He believes that this low attendance may be due to fear of being found out by "association," and therefore being exposed to a potentially hostile environment. This concern was also shared by one student attending this second to last conference that Friday. The student mentioned that ever since he's been "out," he's received a lot of hostile reactions

from his campus peers. He mentioned that he hopes to be able to deal with this setback even if it means talking to each person who confronts him one-on-one.

Some students felt disappointed that so few faculty and staff members participated in the conference. Rubin suggested using the media in the future. He said, "Sometimes the only way to get responses is by being confrontational. You need to escalate sometimes in order to create change. Look at Gallaudet (University in Washington, D.C.) and what they did to bring about change!" Gallaudet University was the site of the March 1988 deaf rally against the newly appointed hearing president Dr. Elizabeth Ann Zinser; the students called for a deaf president to be appointed "now," and their demands were met.

The week long series continued with seminars like "Why Gay?," "Coming Out: Gay and Lesbian Empowerment," "Discrimination, Empowerment, and Political Action," "Sensitivity in the Workplace," culminating with a benefit entitled "Celebrate Your Sexuality Bash" on the evening of Jan. 15. The bash, a fundraiser to benefit the Deaf AIDS Care of Rochester, was also a success, turning out about the same number of people as did other events. Rubin dressed for the evening in his leather attire, and some students took the opportunity to show their true selves in drag.

The week ended that Saturday with a meeting of the minds on how to go about establishing support and advocacy groups within the campus community.

NTID organizers hope to make the mini-conference an annual event, and hope to be able to bring not only deaf gay males as keynote speakers, but also lesbian representatives.

Care Cuts on Feb. 8 will benefit AIDS Rochester; party to follow at Carpe Diem

Rochester area hair stylists will be cutting hair for their clients on Feb. 8, and the proceeds will benefit AIDS Rochester's support services to people affected HIV/AIDS, as well as educational programs and outreach in the community.

The fourth annual Care Cuts has attracted more stylists than ever before. Last year, Care Cuts raised \$7,700 within 16 salons, and Gannett Rochester Newspapers gave it a "thumbs up!"

Care Cuts '93 is open to the public. Appointments are recommended. For a list of participating salons and stylists, call the AIDS Rochester Development Office at 442-2220.

A celebration party will follow Care Cuts '93 at Carpe Diem, 99 Court St., with hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar for all participants, beginning at 6 p.m. During the reception, Harry Bruno, the owner of Harry Bruno Salon and member of AIDS Rochester's board of directors, will announce the results of the day's fundraising activities.

AIDS Rochester is the community service program designated by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute for Monroe and seven neighboring counties.

To William Huggins, 1953-1992

To: William D. Huggins - 5/17/53 to 10/13/92 From and by: Carl D. Pitts

Sometimes - I feel as if I haven't achieved, but I have Sometimes I think why, when, what for, but I already know Sometimes I wish the world could live as one, but it's not time Sometimes time itself means so much, but holds so little Sometimes, I touch, but never reach Sometimes, I smile before I cry Sometimes there isn't much left, but

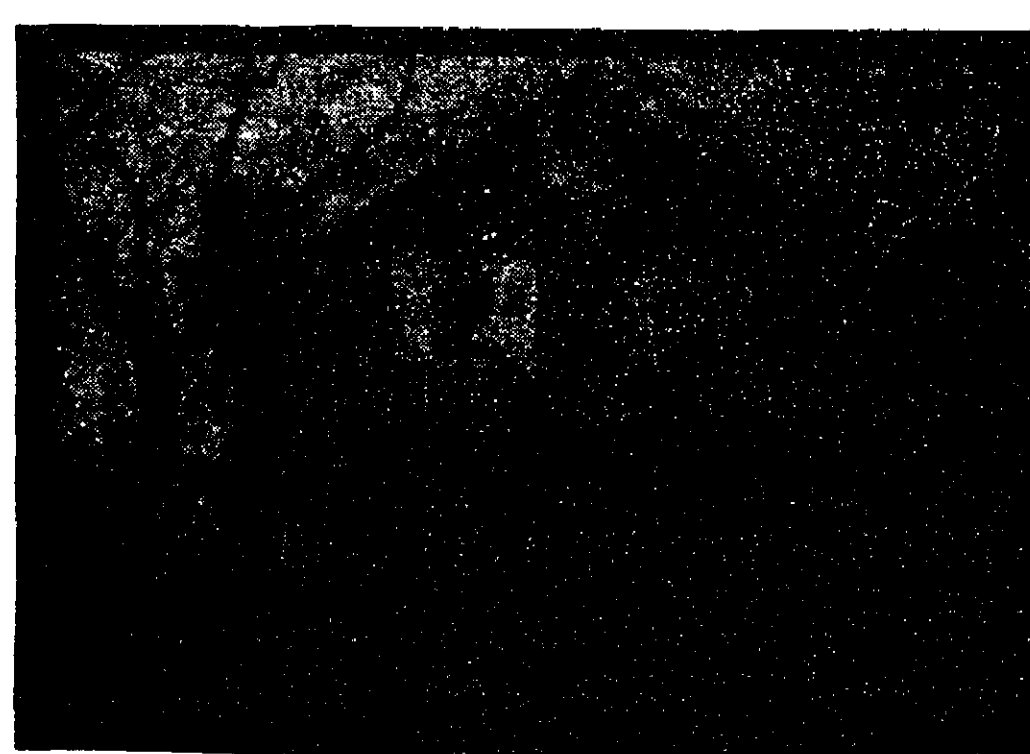
Sometimes there is love.

Local news continued on p. 27



8-14 Harvard Street

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Advertisement for Club Mahara featuring social dancing and country music. Text includes: 'Have You Ever Thought Of???' 'BALLROOM - SOCIAL DANCING' 'COUNTRY' 'Come by yourself or with a partner \$3.00 per person for lessons' 'Sunday Nights At CLUB MAHARA!' 'Club Mahara 10-12 South Washington Street' 'Instruction from ARTHUR MURRAY'S: Bill Jones Call 262-4114 for details'

Advertisement for SAINT bar listing DJ events. Text includes: 'SAINT' 'D.J. GIPPE MODERN ALTERNATIVE WEDNESDAYS' 'D.J. FLEX 2 FOR 1 DRINK SPECIALS' 'D.J. SAMMY 2 FOR 1 DRINK SPECIALS' 'SUNDAY THEME NIGHTS' 'PUMP Your Burn Muscle O'Loce'

Advertisement for Washington DC event and Anthony's bar. Text includes: 'Washington DC APRIL 25, 1993' 'DON'T MISS THIS ONE!' 'MAKE OUR BAR YOUR BAR...' 'ANTHONY'S 522' 'MON-FRI SPECIAL NOON to 8pm 3 for 2 Free Snacks'

OPINION

Beating ourselves up: what are the guys in the underwear catalog selling?

By Jim Otin

I tear open the black plastic envelope because I open all my junk mail. As I crack open the catalogue, a mean lean and muscled guy catches my eye. I'm in love, or more accurately, in heat. My dick starts getting hard as my brain starts going soft.

My guess is that the merchant would say he was using attractive models to draw my attention to the merchandise. Not in my case! My now flaccid brain is saying, "Buy these things and you will be as attractive to your friends as these models are."

I'm in the house where I can start from the front cover. I find two picture-perfect men standing shirtless, so close together they are airbrushed together. With pink, white and black lettering, I am told I am holding "The Catalogue for the Gay Man."

The merchant was right, the model did get my attention. I am also starting to pick up the message that these guys look like what gay men should look like. The problem is that I don't look like that and am not able to look like them.

On the inside cover are four bodies, shaved legs, shaved arms, shaved chests, muscled torsos, jumbo baskets, faces that seem to say "take me home tonight." The copy tells me that this catalogue caters exclusively to gay men. It recognizes and reveres gay style. It goes on to mention gay freedom.

If the merchant wants to promote gay freedom he might start with the stereo-

type many gay men have about themselves, feeling that they need to look like these models to be a worthwhile person. How about some people who look like my friends modeling the clothing? My friends are Black, white, Asian, abled, disabled, fat, thin, young, old, hairy, bald and come in a random assortment.

Another page shows a leather cage-like jacket on a model whose body language seems to say "take me home" or just "take me." Above him are red and black letters labeling him "Boy Toy." Pictured opposite is a guy bare-chested in a leather jacket wearing bicycle type shorts that looks like a garter belt holding up black stockings. Part of the copy read "Snare the Savage Beast."

Models on other pages wear outrageous and conventional clothing. All the models are white, well-muscled, of medium build, in their 30's. All are pictured in upper-middle-class social situations. Nobody I know looks like the guys in this catalogue.

When I turn the pages of the catalogue I get the message that if I buy the items I will be sexy. I also get an extended message that if I don't look 30, well-muscled, over-groomed and have a big basket I'm not a worthwhile person. I get a message that the ideal is to look like the models in the catalogue.

Over the years women have been portrayed as being very thin by the fashion industry. Many researchers feel this portrayal is a major contributor to the increase in eating disorders like bulimia and anorexia.

The same message is coming across in

I feel good when I get a catalogue that recognizes that I am a gay consumer and a merchant wants my business, but I don't want to be told by merchants what constitutes a good-looking gay man. I don't want to be exposed to the subliminal message that I need to look a certain way to be a worthwhile gay man.

most clothing catalogues directed to gay men. The underwear catalogue shows a guy undressed to the waist, but is photographed from head to toe, bulging with that "perfect" body that the merchandiser is defining.

The message is these. If I want to be a "Boy Toy" or if I want to "Snare the Savage Beast" I had better be over-groomed, well-muscled, big-basketed and thin. A real gay freedom is the freedom from the stereotyped gay man portrayed in the underwear catalogues.

I feel good when I get a catalogue that recognizes that I am a gay consumer and a merchant wants my business, but I don't want to be told by merchants what constitutes a good-looking gay man. I don't want to be exposed to the subliminal message that I

need to look a certain way to be a worthwhile gay man.

If a merchant wants my business he will have to hire models that more closely reflect me and the people around me, not the stereotyped pretty boys I see now. I'm not going to order anything from the catalogue because I know it's not going to make me any more attractive, but the more catalogues I see like this one, the more I am going to doubt what real people look like and are striving to look like.



It's time again to go to Washington D.C.: plan to join a million gay marchers on April 25

By Coni Robinson

Things have changed in the past few years and the past few months. For the first time our community has openly endorsed a major party candidate. And guess what — we won!

During his campaign President Clinton spoke in support of lesbian, gay and bisexual civil rights. That acknowledgement from Clinton and other politicians, that we can be a powerful political FORCE, that we really do live next door, work in the next office and are really not so different, has brought many changes.

Washington DC APRIL 25, 1993



DON'T MISS THIS ONE!

On the positive side, it has brought our community, in all of its diversity, into more dialogue with each other and allowed many of us to feel strong and empowered. That same acknowledgement has brought a backlash from the far right, as evidenced by the failed anti-gay initiative in Oregon and the far right's winning effort in Colorado.

But this backlash has positive elements also. It has raised our awareness about civil rights and about accessing what is rightfully ours. It has shown the importance of speaking out and doing something to create change.

On April 25 one million participants are expected to take over the streets of our nation's capital, demanding that "Liberty and Justice for All" apply to all Americans without regard to their sexual orientation.

Over 650,000 of us marched in '87, but sadly not one of the platform demands made have been met. We are not free to live and love as we choose. Sodomy laws are still on the books in many states. We are still subject to violent attacks and harassment every day. And our friends, families and loved ones continue to live with HIV and the AIDS pandemic that up until now the previous administrations have ignored.

It is time again to go to D.C. to demand our rights. To quote Morris Knight (founder of Christopher St. West), "this may be our last great chance to do some-

Washington DC APRIL 25, 1993



DON'T MISS THIS ONE!

things so great, so mystical that everyone for the rest of their lives will be enchanted by it."

So what I'm saying is, be there! Support the march in any way you can, be it spiritual, emotional or financial. And remember those we have lost, those who would be there if they could. You can do this by supporting the missing in action program (MIA). For a \$5 donation you can have a lost loved one's name displayed on a banner at the Mall along with thousands of other brothers and sisters who have fallen to a disease fueled by our government's inactivity and indifference.

Finally, talk about the march wherever you go, get the word out to all our brothers and sisters. Let's show Bill that we intend to make sure he keeps his word. See you in D.C.!!

For more information on the MIA program, contact me at 328-4594.

Washington DC APRIL 25, 1993



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Making the scene

Joe Steffan's concert with the Freedom Singers brings local and national attention, support

By John Strand

The Rochester Freedom Singers' debut Holiday Concert with prominent gay activist Joe Steffan not only drew a full house, but reached the entire community through media coverage.

Ironically singing in Rochester the same weekend as the Army-Navy football game, Steffan's reception was very warm. Having sung the national anthem twice for the Army-Navy games, Steffan sang publicly for the first time in four years on Dec. 6 with the newly formed local mixed chorus under the direction of Dr. Ted Ashizawa.

The Freedom Singers concert featured Benjamin Britten's "Ceremony of Carols," and the 23 member ensemble joined Steffan with six traditional Christmas carols, as well.

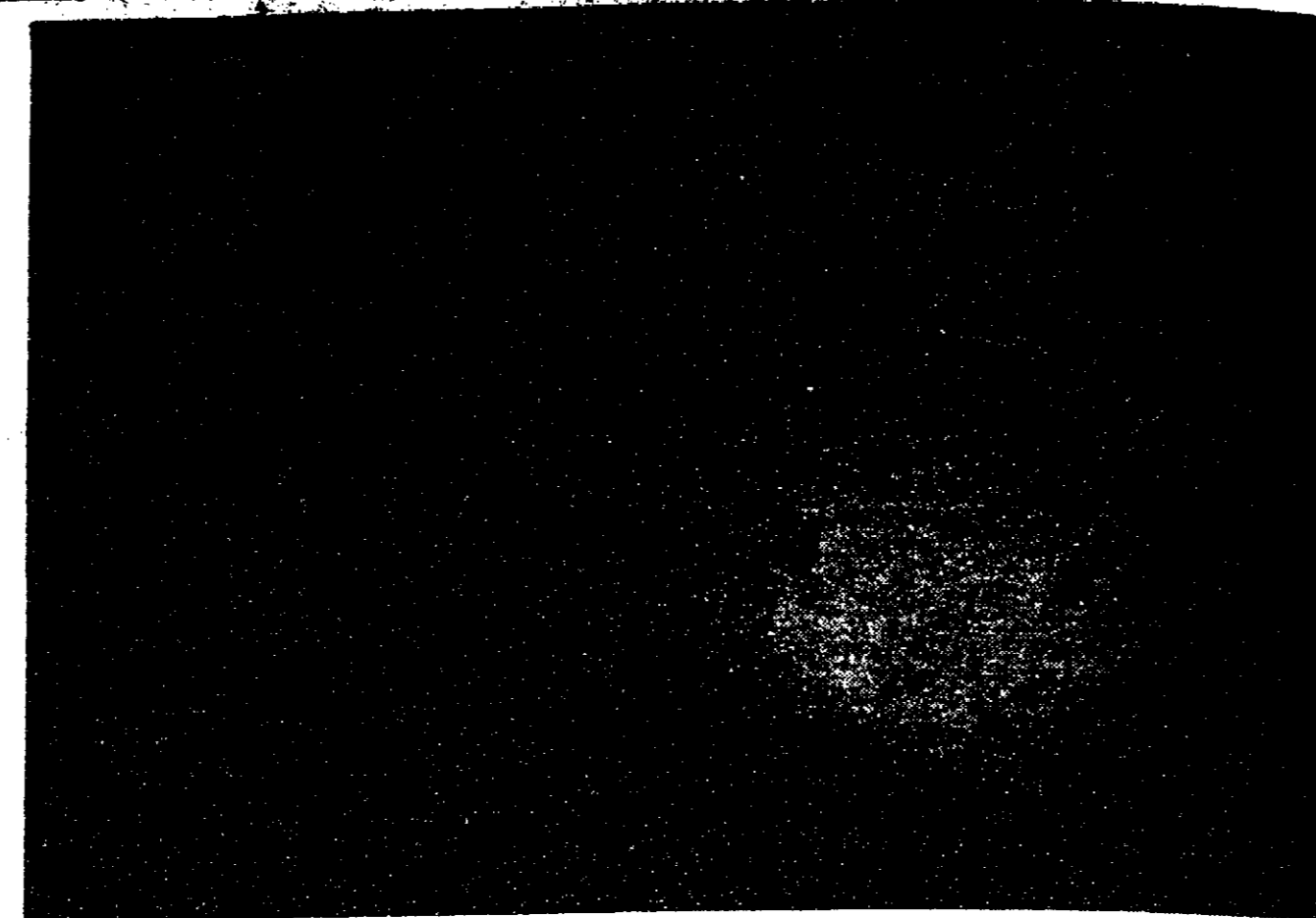
Steffan soloed with his own selection of six holiday artsongs. He was accompanied by David Abbott on the piano. Even before he began singing, the audience gave him a lengthy standing ovation.

Well-known through his challenge of the U.S. military's ban on gays and lesbians in the military, Steffan recently released his hardcover book, *Honor Bound*, which is already into its second printing. Formerly the voice of the Navy while a midshipman at the Naval Academy, Steffan put his singing in the closet until his joint concert with the Rochester Freedom Singers.

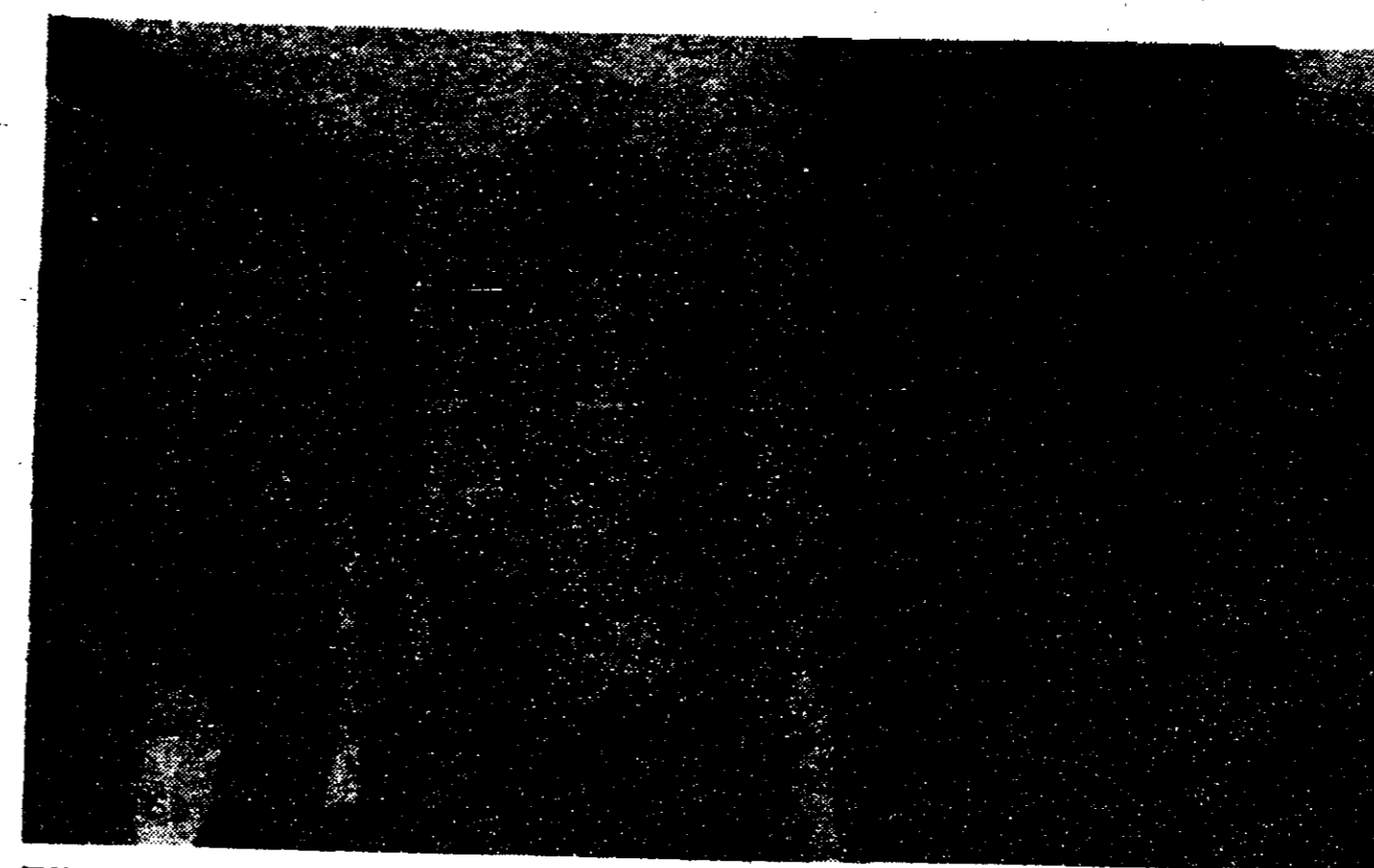
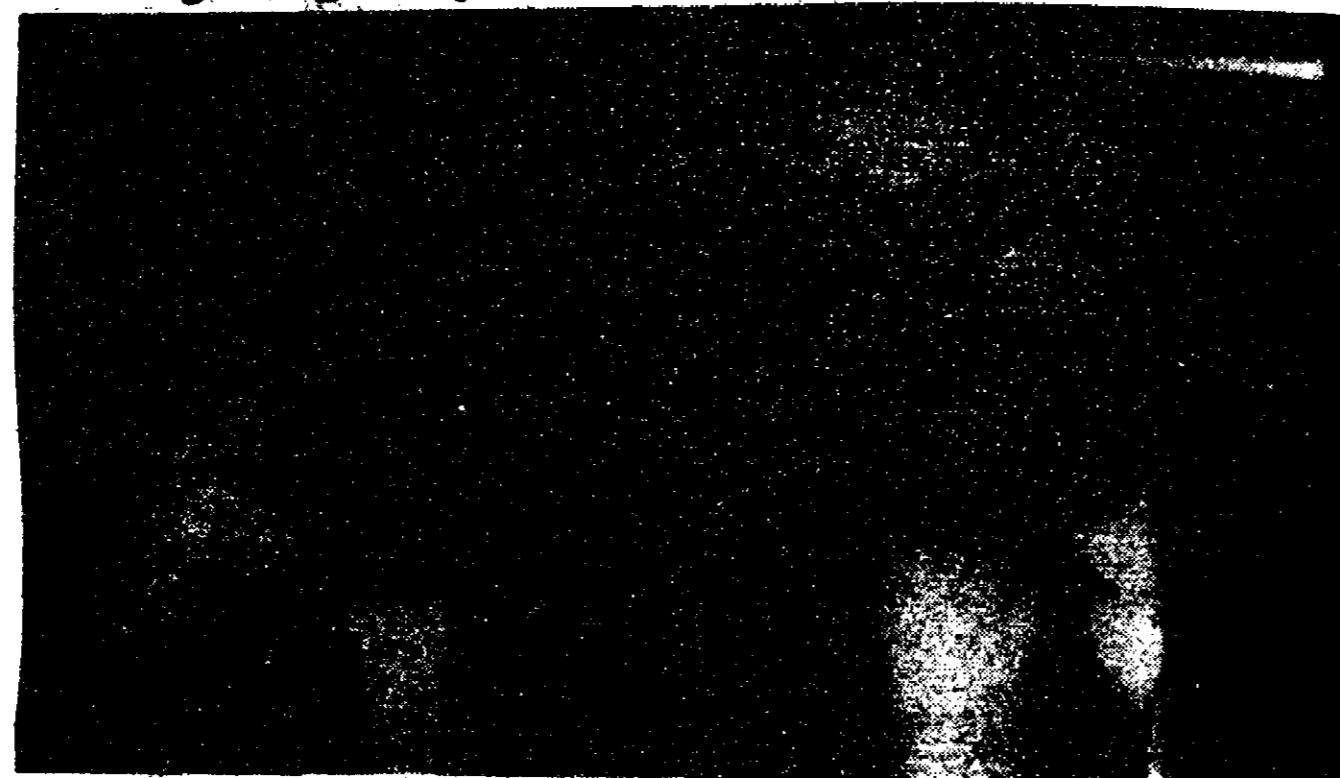
Four Rochester television stations and one radio station featured Steffan during his weekend with the Freedom Singers. He received attention not only from local print media, but also nationally in *The Advocate* for singing for the first time since leaving the Navy, and with the Rochester mixed chorus.

At a well-attended reception for Steffan on Dec. 5, he said that singing now represents an important closure for him personally, and that he is pleased to have come full circle with issues regarding gays in the military. He was referring particularly to President Clinton's promise to lift the ban through executive order. Members of the local gay community as well as school board members, legislators, councilmen, and others honored Steffan at that Saturday reception.

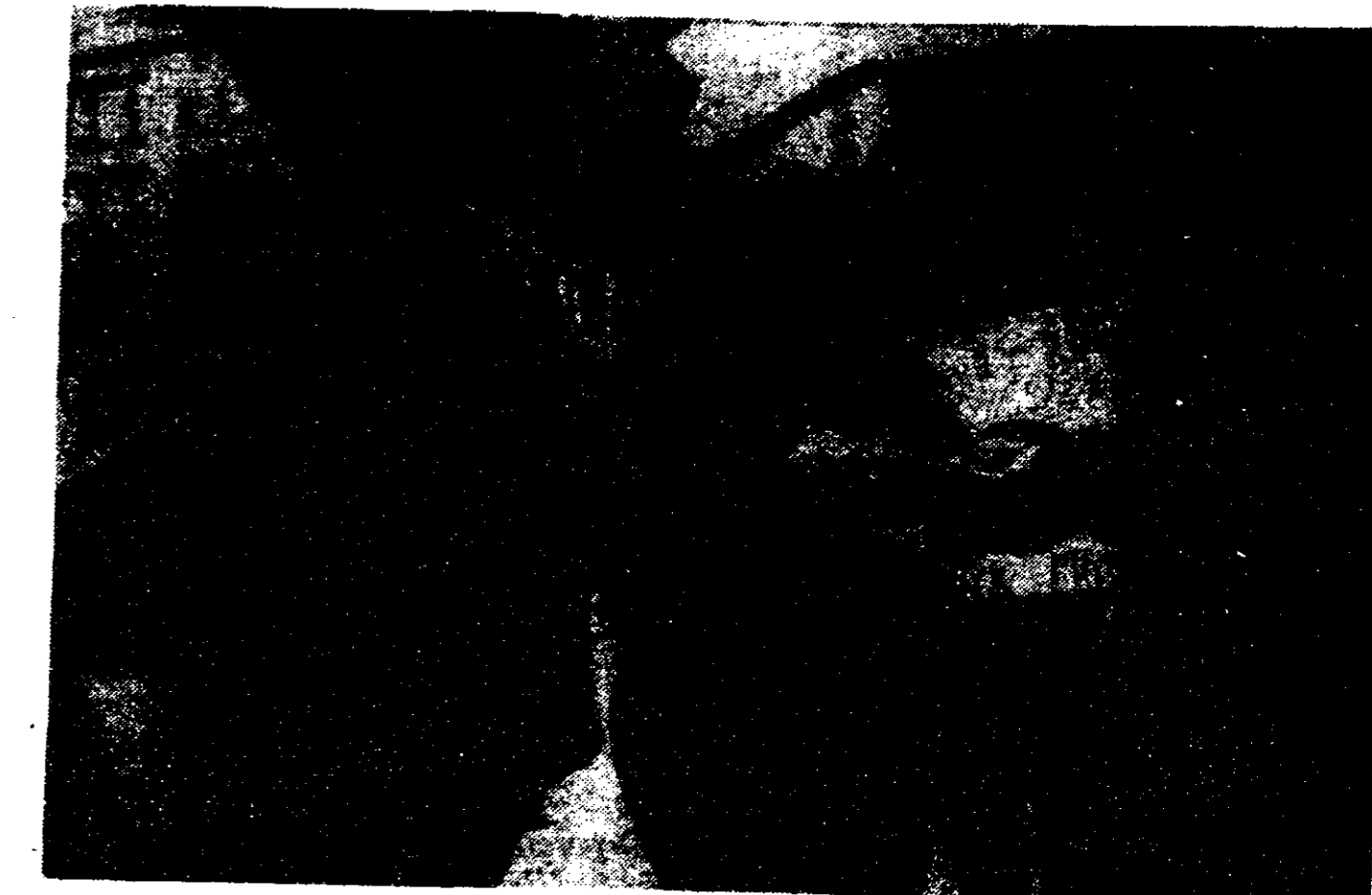
Dr. Ashizawa said the holiday concert was a great start for the new chorus, which is a group dedicated to inclusion, not exclusion. He invites new singers to join now that the Rochester Freedom Singers are preparing for their early June concert entitled, "One World, Many Faces." Women are especially needed. For information call John Strand at 442-4120.



Joe Steffan performs with the Freedom Singers on Dec. 6. Below, he reacts to statements by Admiral Moorer on *The Donahue Show*. Photos by Doug Meszler.



The Political Caucus hosted a Clinton celebration party at Carpe Diem on Jan. 22. Above, left to right, are Bill Pritchard, Mark Simac, an unidentified woman and Rich Ognibene. Photo by Ellen Mahaffy.



ACT-UP Rochester members handing out "safer sex kits" at Main and Clinton on World AIDS Day, Dec. 1. Photo by Doug Meszler.



Tim Mains of City Council with John Noble at the Clinton party on Jan. 22. Photo by Ellen Mahaffy.



Rep. Kevin Murray talks to Don Bielak of the Caucus at Carpe Diem. Photo by Ellen Mahaffy.

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To Plan an Overnight to Ithaca

FEBRUARY

MONDAY 1
Candlemas. Brigit's Eve, Inebol. Celtic fire feast of beginnings/renewal of life.
Political Caucus forum. Shetzi Salvione of Empire State Pride Agenda will speak on gay rights legislation in N.Y. State. 7 pm, First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd.
COAP video night. Call James, 242-9195.
Explorations: Color, Form and Pattern. Show by Eric Bellmann and Sr. Annette Mare. Through Feb. 13 at Shoestring Gallery, Brighton Commons at Twelve Corners.
TUESDAY 2
International Women's Day meeting. 7 pm, YWCA, Boardroom A, 175 N. Clinton Ave. All women are welcome.
All-women downhill ski trip. Sponsored by Out and About. Call Renelle, 232-2999.
FRIDAY 5
Adirondacks women's weekend. Sponsored by Out and About. Feb. 5-7, Fourth Lake, Old Forge. Call Sue or Beth, 244-7159.
AIDS Mastery Workshop. Weekend workshop sponsored by AIDS Center, Strong Memorial Hospital. Feb. 5-7, 275-3576.
Photographs by Tara Maguire. Proceeds to AIDS agencies. The Saint, 171 St. Paul St. Come Out for Movies. *Thelma and Louise* (7 pm) and *Parting Glances* (9:30 pm) at Gay

Alliance Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Free popcorn, other refreshments (hot cocoa...) Close-captioned or subtitled. To benefit Rochester Bisexual Women's Network. 461-3576 (V/TTY.)
Leather Fantasy Night. 8 pm, \$5 donation to benefit AIDS Rochester. The Saint, 171 St. Paul St. Leather organizations from Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse will take part.
SATURDAY 6
Dr. Virginia Mollenkott speaking on "Intimacy and Ultimacy: the Sexuality/Spirituality Connection." Followed by public dialogue, reception. 7:30-9 pm, Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 325-4000.
Brothers United board meeting. 7 pm, Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave.
Omega coffeehouse. 8-11 pm. Call Jan, 223-1748, or Corky, 924-1579.
SUNDAY 7
Dr. Virginia Mollenkott, adult class, 9:30 am; guest preacher at 11 am worship service. Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 325-4000.
COAP Star Trek night. Call James, 242-9195.
MONDAY 8
COAP bowling night. Call Dana, 323-2895.
Care Cuts. Day of haircutting to benefit AIDS Rochester.

For list of salons, call ARI, 244-2220. Celebration party, 6 pm, Carpe Diem, 99 Court St.
Political Caucus meeting: Sue Cowell will speak on running a political campaign. 7:30 pm, Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave. Call Bill Pritchard, 251-7437.
THURSDAY 11
Sixth National Black Lesbian and Gay Conference. Feb. 11-15, Hilton Hotel, Long Beach, Calif. Speakers include Angela Davis and Bell Hooks. (213)666-5495; FAX (213)666-5900.
FRIDAY 12
Brothers United Valentine's Party. 10pm-2am, The Saint, 171 St. Paul St. \$5 admission; cash bar.
SATURDAY 13
Nutrition for HIV positive people. 10 am-noon, Incarnate Word Lutheran Church, corner Goodman and East Ave. \$2. Register by Feb. 11. 244-6065.
Community forum. For all Rochester-area gay groups. 10 am-noon, Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave. Call Bill Pritchard, 251-7437.
Safer Sex workshop. 1:30-5 pm, The Saint, 171 St. Paul St. Sponsored by John Washburn Library, Community Health Network. Interpreted for deaf and hearing impaired. Call Sid Metzger, 244-9000.
SUNDAY 14
A Bid From the Heart. Gay Alliance fourth annual gala auc-

tion and champagne brunch. 1-5 pm, Top of the Plaza \$12 in advance, \$15 at door. Tickets at Rochester Custom Leather, AIDS Rochester, Village Green, Paul's Grocery, Silkwood, Parkleigh.
Relationship Sunday. Open Arms MCC, 875 E. Main. 6 pm. 271-8478.
Love Songs Among the Stars. Rochester Gay Men's Chorus at Strasenburgh Planetarium. 5 pm, \$10. 423-0650.
MONDAY 15
Empty Closet deadline. Articles, letters to editor, classified ads, non-camera-ready ads. 244-9030.
TUESDAY 16
International Women's Day meeting. 7 pm, YWCA, Boardroom A, 175 N. Clinton Ave. All women are welcome.
The Sum of Us. Opening of play by David Stevens about a father and gay son. Feb. 16-March 21, GEVA Theater, 75 Woodbury Blvd. Tickets 232-GEVA; Voice/TTY 325-1441; FAX (716)232-4031.
WEDNESDAY 17
Rochester Rams. Meeting, 8:15 pm, Bachelor Forum, 470 University Ave.
THURSDAY 18
"Getting Into the Picture: Women in the Arts." Lecture by Marilyn Symmes, judge of "Women Art Works 3." 7-8:30 pm, Pyramid Arts Center, third floor, Village Gate Square, 274 N.

Goodman St. 461-2222.
FRIDAY 19
Empty Closet deadline. Photographs, camera-ready ads. 244-9030.
Jewish Women's Voices Past and Present. Feb. 19-21, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor St. W, Toronto. Workshops, readings, more. \$75 includes some meals (vegetarian). Call (416)923-6641; FAX (416)926-4725.
SATURDAY 20
Out and About skiing. Cross country skiing at all levels at Genesee County Park. Call Bob, 473-9384.
Brothers United board meeting. 7 pm, Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave.
Sixth Annual AIDS Interfaith Service. 7:30 pm, South-Emmanuel United Church of Christ, 1095 E. Henrietta Rd. SL interpreted. 271-8478.
Rochester Gay Men's Chorus. Concert, Crouse Auditorium, Syracuse University, Syracuse. 8 pm, fee charged. 423-0650.
Rochester Rams February bar night 9 pm-2 am, Bachelor Forum, 470 University Ave.
SUNDAY 21
Gospel worship service. Open Arms MCC, 875 E. Main St. 6 pm. 271-8478.
COAP brunch. 11:30 am. Call Chuck, 334-2795.
Out and About potluck social. Bring dish to pass. Call Jim, 288-0403.

ONGOING

MONDAY 22
COAP bowling night. Call Dana, 323-2895.
WEDNESDAY 24
Ash Wednesday service. Open Arms MCC, 875 E. Main St. 8 pm. 271-8478.
FRIDAY 26
COAP organizational meeting. Call Jim, 427-8551.
Come Out for Movies. *Fried Green Tomatoes* (7 pm) and *Enter the Night* (10 pm), Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave. Free popcorn, other refreshments (hot cocoa...) Close-captioned or subtitled. To benefit Rochester Bisexual Women's Network. 461-3576 (V/TTY.)
Brothers United social. 10 pm-2 am, The Saint, 171 St. Paul St. \$5 admission, cash bar.
SATURDAY 27
Open Arms MCC night out. Dinner at Tony Roma's, 125 White Spruce Blvd. 5:30 pm. Rochester Women's Community Chorus concert, 8 pm. 271-8478.
Changing the World Through Song. Rochester Women's Community Chorus and Creative Responses Chorus of Rochester. 8 pm, \$5. Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St.
Brothers United board meeting. 7 pm, Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave.
MONDAY 29
COAP Rocky Horror mid-night show. call Dana, 323-2895.
MONDAY 1
Empty Closet mailing party. For March issue. 7-9 pm, Gay Alliance (upstairs), 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-9030.

SUNDAY
More Light Support Group for gay and lesbian people and friends, 12:30 pm, third Sundays. Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 325-4000.
Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays 2:30 pm, St. Luke's/St. Simon's Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. Last Sunday. 865-0120.
Dignity-Integrity 5 pm, St. Luke's/St. Simon's Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. Every third Sunday. Potluck dinner after Mass. 328-9758.
Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church 875 E. Main St. (Prince St. entrance of Auditorium Center.) 6 pm. 271-8478.
Rochester Bisexual Women's Network. Meeting and potluck supper. 6:30 pm, second Sunday. For location, info, call 461-3576.
Gay Men's Cooking Group 7:30 pm, fourth Sunday. 244-8640.
Gay Men's Alcoholics Anonymous. St. Luke's/St. Simon's Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. 8:30 pm, 232-6720.
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Friends Association (GLBFA) U. of Rochester. Sundays, 7:30 pm, Morcy 402.
Rochester Rangers monthly business meeting, first Sundays. 4 pm, Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave. 251-2122.

Rochester Lesbian and Gay Political Caucus Every second Monday, 7:30 pm, Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-8640.
Parents and friends of Jewish lesbians and gays Support group meets on first Monday. Call Michele Rucka at Jewish Family Services, 461-0110.
Women's basketball Monday nights, Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. Non-competitive hour, 7-8 pm, competitive hour after 8 pm. Call Rarona, 244-1640.
LABWIS (GLBFA women's group) U. of Rochester. Second and fourth Mondays, 7:30 pm. WC 507.
Gay and Lesbian Support Group Third Presbyterian Church, 4 Meigs St. First and third Mondays, 7:30-9 pm, 271-6513.
"This Way Out" International gay and lesbian radio magazine, 7:30 pm, every Monday. WTRR FM 89.7. 475-2000.

TUESDAY
Rochester Gay Men's Chorus Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 7-9:30 pm. 251-2077.
Sexual Compulsives Anon. For those desiring their own personal sexual sobriety. 7:30-9 pm. For location call 244-8640.
BiGayLa RIT. Social event/discussion night. Every Tuesday night, 7-9 pm. Lezy Lounge, Soliharnann Hall. 475-4370.
Gay Alcoholics Anonymous 8 pm, Genesee Hospital, 244 Alexander St.
Finger Lakes Gay and Lesbian Social Group Third Tuesdays and first Fridays. (315)536-7753, ask for Sam Edwards, or write PO Box 211, Pen Yann NY 14527.

Drug/alcohol continuing care program DAAA/DSAS-sanctioned after-care program open to HIV positive people in recovery who have completed intensive outpatient or inpatient program. Every Tuesday and Thursday. AIDS Rochester, 1350 University Ave. 442-2220 or (800)437-0157.
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Friends hotline GLBFA, U. of Rochester. Tuesdays, 8-11 pm, 275-8341, ex. 5.

WEDNESDAY
Rochester Women's Community Chorus Rehearsals, Pinnacle Place, 919 S. Clinton Ave. 6:30-8:30 pm.
Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley board of directors Meeting, second Wednesdays, 7 pm, 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-8640.
Gay Alcoholics Anonymous 7 pm, Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd.
Out and About seniors group Various activities. Call Bria, 647-9141.
Positively Sober AA group, closed meetings. AIDS Rochester, 1350 University Ave. Every Wed., noon to 1 pm.
Bisexual Gay Lesbian Union Monroe Community College. Every Wednesday at noon, Room 6-313, 292-2000.

THURSDAY
Presbyterians for Lesbian and Gay Concerns 6:30 pm, first Thursday. For location call Pat, 244-8963.
Gay Alcoholics Anonymous Closed meeting. St. Luke's/St. Simon's Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. 8:30 pm. 232-6720.
Rochester Historical Bowling Society Clover Lanes, 2750 Monroe Ave. 8:30 pm, 251-2175.
Drug/Alcohol continuing care program Second of two-day care program offered weekly by AIDS Rochester, 1350 University Ave.

Positive Recovery NA Group Closed meeting for addicts only. 3:30 pm, AIDS Rochester, 1350 University Ave. 442-2220 or (800)437-0157.
Gay and Lesbian Educators of Genesee Valley (GALE) Fourth Thursdays, 7:30 pm. For location call 244-8640, leave message.
AIDS AIDS bereavement support group. Second and fourth Thursdays. AIDS Rochester, 1350 University Ave. 7-8:30 pm. 377-0332.
Freedom Singers. Rehearsal every Thursday 7-9:30 pm, Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 442-4120.

FRIDAY
Sexual Compulsives Anon. 5:30-7 pm. For location call 244-8640.
Finger Lakes Gay-Lesbian Social Group First Fridays and third Tuesdays. Call (315)536-5573 and ask for Sam Edwards, or write PO Box 211, Pen Yann NY 14527.
GLAS Gay/Lesbian Alternative Socials. 8 pm- midnight, Sept. through May, at Universalist Church, 150 S. Clinton Ave. 232-6031 (voice/TDD), Monday-Thursday 6:30-9:30 pm.

SATURDAY
Gay/Lesbian At-Aton First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd. 7 pm.
Rochester Rams bar night Third Saturdays. 8 pm-2 am, Bachelor Forum, 470 University Ave. 271-6930.
Omega coffeehouse First Saturday, Sept.-June. 8-11 pm. Call Jan, 223-1748.
SUITS Sisters United in Two Spirits (formerly Rochester Lesbians of Color Organization.) Third Saturday. 2-6 pm, Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-9564.

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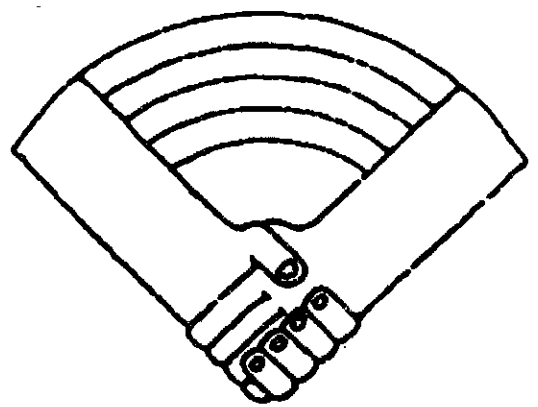
The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:5

In the tradition of those churches which formed the underground railroad to rescue African-Americans from slavery in this country,
 In the tradition of those churches which hid Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe,
 In the tradition of those churches which provide sanctuary for persons fleeing state terrorism in Central America,
 We welcome lesbian and gay persons into the life and ministry of our church, despite the recently adopted policy of our denomination.
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 50 Ward Hill Rd. 255-3344
- TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
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"For Those We Love"



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Saturday, February 20th
 7:30 pm

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GROWING UP

By
ERIC BELLMANN

Growing up, Baby

Dear Jean, I haven't properly thanked you. I've just returned from my trip to Syria. Forgive my delay in writing. You caught me off guard when you handed me the ring in the parking lot after our meeting. I hadn't taken you seriously when you said you wanted to get rid of your ex's ring. And then when I saw what a handsome silver and turquoise ring it was, well, I was just, I suppose, stunned. It's beautiful, much nicer than the others I have, which of course you've noticed and commented on.

Every couple of years when I visit my mother in New Mexico, I buy a ring. Turquoise is my birthstone and they sell jewelry everywhere. As time has passed I've ended up with several. But the one you gave me is the nicest. Perhaps this anecdote will interest you.

Fifteen years ago in Germany I met a man, not German, but a foreigner working there. He had a motorcycle. We went for a ride into the countryside. It was late at night and he was romantic. To my amazement, when he dropped me off at my hotel he asked for one of the rings I was wearing! Both rings were inexpensive silver "puzzle" rings, the kind that flip apart and are hard to reassemble unless you've played with them awhile. I was offended by his request and proud, then, of myself for telling him "no." He rode off sadly. I have no idea where those rings are today, long lost.

Over the years I've read some, and now understand that in certain cultures the gesture of small presents is an appropriate way of, let us say, making impulsive behavior more genteel. I reflect that my companion that August evening in Mainz was lonely, and had I had the

grace to buy him dinner or give him that insignificant ring, I could have eased his conscience and perhaps sustained our fragile mood of romance.

Well, not only am I older now, but I have a whole box of rings among my assets, so on this trip I took several with the clear intent of passing them out among conquests. I was traveling in a country where men love men and couple with them with an ease that is not common here. I'd done my research. It was just a matter of waiting it out.

And then I met baby. Waleed was our guide in Syria. Arabic names have meaning. Waleed, to my amusement translates to "baby." Actually Waleed was not our main guide. We also had Timo, who was in charge and supposed to know everything, arrange everything, but he turned out to be an arrogant boor who miscalculated travel times, took us to restaurants we hated, grudgingly allowed us the briefest periods of free time. Timo used Waleed only to deal with the locals, when clearly Waleed was bright and knowledgeable and liked Americans.

It's my gambit when I travel to foreign car sickness, so I can sit next to the driver where I can get the best view of the countryside. I just tell everyone that if I can't sit there I'll throw up! That way I'm spared talking about jobs and children and politics with the other tourists. Anyway, on this bus the up-front seat was a double and Waleed was assigned the task of giving travel directions to the driver, who hadn't made any trips outside of Damascus!

And so I got to know Waleed, listen to him grouch about Timo (which he did very reluctantly — he was quite professional) and he got to know me. I complained, told him what I wanted, what I needed — to see the people, be closer to the culture, to discover things. I wanted to be away from the group. I wanted more time in the souls, more time in the old parts of cities. I have always wanted more.

Then one morning, to Timo's horror,

Waleed told the driver to leave the road and head across the desert's hand-packed sand, and he took us — me really — to a Bedouin camp! It was wonderful. The Bedouins were quiet at first, cautious perhaps, but they are profoundly hospitable people and welcomed us into their tent. We took off our shoes and sat on rugs with them and they offered us tea. I asked Waleed to tell one woman I admired her gold earrings and he whispered he could not, for if he did she would surely give them to me. He told me all about Bedouins. Waleed was pleased at my interest, he became my teacher.

One evening Waleed asked me to go for a walk with him. At first it seemed like Waleed needed to express his frustration over the tour, but after 15 minutes of complaints he relaxed and began telling me about Sofita, the charming coastal city where we were staying. He talked about his education, his family, his military service — his life. Another night we snuck off to a restaurant where I was the only foreigner. There was a silly waterfall which the waiters could turn on and off like a bath shower, and they did that several times when they saw my camera, eager for me to enjoy picture taking. The food was superb and I smoked a water pipe and a fat woman sitting nearby who was also smoking a water pipe giggled uncontrollably each time I inhaled and coughed.

Another evening, in Aleppo, Waleed translated when I met an olive vendor, a handsome man who eyed my earring with special interest. Waleed understood that I preferred men — actually I told him in a rather impulsive moment while I was smoking that confounded water pipe. I'd even told Waleed that in the late half the gay men had had crushes growing up on a TV character named Wally Cleaver, which is kind of what his name sounded like. (I'm not sure he understood that, but it gives you an idea of the extent to which our conversations evolved.) To my delight the olive vendor extended an invitation to dinner which

I declined with considerable regret. There just wasn't time. Instead I took his photograph. It will do.

Late at night as I wrote in my journal I thought about things; reflection is perhaps the most important aspect of traveling, perhaps of greater value than visiting places like Palmyra or the Omayyad Mosque. The next morning at breakfast I gave Waleed one of the silver and turquoise rings I had bought several years ago in New Mexico, a ring that is smaller than the one you gave me, one of the rings I no longer wear. I was nervous giving the ring to Waleed but did not hesitate. I simply told him I wanted him to have it as a present. He put on the table and that impressed me, he did not regard my gesture as suspicious.

Waleed wore the ring constantly. He liked it. Waleed liked me. Actually — and while this may be hard to believe it isn't hard to explain, we'd spent so much time talking about his country and my fascination with it and my appreciation for his efforts to help me experience it and about his enthusiasm for Americans — we had fallen in love. A remarkable love anchored in the shared annoyance of wretched Timo, but celebrated over wonderful Arabic cuisine during long talks under starry Syrian nights.

At the airport Waleed had to stand behind a barrier beyond which nationals could not move as our group was processed through passport control. We waved goodbye across a vast marble hallway. Both of us had tears in our eyes. I've never felt so good about feeling bad.

So, dear Jean, thanks for the ring. My chum Bill has been at me for years to wear fewer rings, too tacky, he insists, for an aging gay prone to excess. Bill's right, of course. I have one less ring. And an ache in my heart. Yesterday I received a postcard from Waleed: "You are my friend. Come back again." Love, Eric.



THE BODY POLITIK

By
BILL PRITCHARD

Conversation with Cuomo

A group of us from Rochester met with Governor Mario Cuomo in December. We were part of a group of gay and lesbian activists from across the state.

The agenda covered AIDS, civil rights, youth issues, domestic partnership and bias-related violence. The majority of the time was spent on AIDS and youth issues. The Governor was attentive and questioned his staff when they did not have answers to our questions. He asked them more than once with investigating our claims and reporting back to him with their findings.

This was the first time I had ever seen Gov. Cuomo in action. He appears to be a very intelligent and articulate man, who definitely adheres to the "buck stops here" policy of management. He didn't mince words when it came to painting the bleak picture of what our State's fiscal status has become. However, the members of our entourage, undeterred by the cries of "poor," continued to press for increased funding of existing programs and the addition of new ones.

It was a good chance to meet people from all over the state. Everyone was excited to be there, mostly because none of

us were sure if we'll ever again have the opportunity to sit down with the Governor. He was holding a series of meetings with various constituent groups that week. After an hour and a half, he was gone.

Cuomo is on record in support of our issues. He has a liaison to the lesbian and gay community, and supports the three major bills in the State Legislature. He has appointed a number of openly gay men and lesbians to prominent positions. We met on the night the Albany City Council voted for gay and lesbian civil rights. The Governor promised either he or his staff would call the remaining fence sitters to persuade them to support the bill. So we knew when we walked in that we were facing a friend.

In spite of having such a tremendous supporter in the Governor's mansion, New York's lesbians and gay men are still without the protections that would be guaranteed by a state-wide civil rights bill. Our relationships have no legal recognition. We criticize Colorado for passing Amendment 2, but we live in a glass house. New York could have been the first state to pass civil rights legislation. Seven other states have done so. We have had this friend for 10 years. Why has better progress not been made?

The legislature in Albany, both houses, has become entrenched with incumbents who are more concerned with securing their own political futures than in the long-term interests of their constituents. Gov. Cuomo even alluded to the horrendous procedure the budget must go through to receive approval. The system is broken and we're all paying the price. This

has become government of the politicians, for the politicians, and by the politicians.

They're not all bad. Locally, we have some fine elected officials representing this area in Albany. Most of them have been there for only one or two terms or have just been elected. But with the way the system is set up, it could take years for any of them to become committee chairs, where the real power begins. Assemblyman David Gantt, a 10 year veteran, just got a chairmanship. Do we have to wait that long?

The answer is no. Gay and lesbian civil rights were needed yesterday and tomorrow won't wait. This year the chances for passage of the rights bill are good. But it will take a large constituent effort to put pressure on the State Senate to make sure it comes up for a vote and is passed. That's where you come in. The outlying counties need to get organized.

Call and/or write your State Senator. Urge him or her to vote yes for your civil rights. If you're not sure who your representative is, call the board of elections. If you know people in areas like Victor, Wyoming and Wayne counties, Seneca Falls, Geneva, get them involved.

Our friends in Albany need us. We put them there. Susan, Joe, David, Rick, and Mary Ellen are ready to help us, but we must help them too. They cannot do it alone.

Our meeting with the Governor was nice. But maybe the time would have been better spent meeting with our adversaries. After all, they're the ones we have to convince. Let's take back our gov-

ernment. Gay men and lesbians have just as much right to be protected against discrimination as anybody else. We can no longer rely on our friends to do the work for us. If we want to be treated equally, we'll have to join in the struggle with them.

Someone once said "...freedom is lost by those unwilling to fight for it." As Colorado has shown the country, there are people out there who are ready to fight to deny us the benefit of any rights. They cannot win and we must not lose.

LESBIAN VIEWS

By
LYNX GALLUCCI

On sex, weaponry, & love

If I could find you
I would say
"Come here,
and let me hold you."

If I could even
Allow myself to look for you,
I would ask,
"Where are you?"

If I could want you,
Really want you,
Without reservation,
I could begin the search.

If I could know
continued on p.20

IT'S UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN TIME - ACT NOW

Here's how to use Donor Option #3:

As the 1993 United Way Campaign gets underway, the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley wants you to consider your options.

With the donor option #3 program your contribution to the GAGV will be used to establish a strong financial base which will increase our self-sufficiency.

Your yearly donation is needed to cover necessary operating expenses and maintain such important services as the Referral List, Telephone Hotline, Empty Closet, Community Center, Speakers Bureau and Library.

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1. Request a donor option form from your United Way solicitor or call 454-2770.
2. Fill out the option form as indicated below.
3. Return the option form to your employer OR mail it directly to the United Way to insure confidentiality:

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55 St. Paul Street
Rochester, New York 14604

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- Must indicate the amount you would like designated.
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Agency Name GAGV

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TWO FOR TUESDAY 10-2. Beer & Liquor Only	SATURDAY 2:45-1 3:00pm	

SUNDAY Bloody's & Screw's 9:00

continued from p.19

That I can find
What I want
I would want you

One of the things people argued over most during the struggle for topfree equality in New York State was whether or not breasts are sexual organs. Well, aren't my breasts sexual? The answer is, they can be. They can also not be.

The question is one of intent. If I'm feeling sexual and intending to act sexually, my breasts are sexual, right along with the rest of my body. If I'm not feeling sexual or intending to act sexually, my breasts are not sexual — right along with the rest of my body.

The key here is that it's my intent. Someone else cannot make my body sexual with their intent. If a man has sexual feelings and wishes to act sexually, then his body is sexual, not mine. If he chooses to act on me against my will, then his body becomes a weapon. At that point, my body is — a body, until I form my own intent. He makes a choice. His body does not have to be a weapon. I make a choice. My body does not have to be sexual.

My body can also become a weapon. If I'm under attack, my body can be a weapon of defense. But my body does not need to be violent in order to be a weapon. I don't need to be angry, fearful, or hateful. When I march for my rights and freedoms, for my safety and my very life, I put my body on the line. I use my body to state my demands. I go prepared to meet those who oppose me with my body.

But more often than not, when I do, I do it with joy and pleasure. I make my

fight in the spirit of pride and celebration. I wield my nonviolent weapon together with others to create a powerful, sweeping movement. I fight for the right to choose what my body will be, and when, and with whom.

I fight for the times when my body is not a weapon. I fight for when my body will be sexual, but also for when it will not be. I fight to know and have it be known that I can have intimacy, even deep, honest, up front, skin-to-skin physical intimacy, without obligation to be sexual.

I can know you without veils or facades by putting my body in full, direct contact with yours. We can hold each other, stroke each other's skin, cuddle, roll, laugh and play. We can snuggle up close and know that it's not out of fear or confusion about things outside us. We can know that it's not jealousy or the threat of loss that makes us squeeze each other so tightly, but that it feels so good to pull ourselves into each other.

My intent is to be loving and to be your friend. This kind of touching is sensual but not sexual. It comes from and creates a safe place for us to be in. And it can be shared by more than two.

My body is my own. I am my body. I am not parts, I am whole. In love and friendship we can be whole together.

You take my hand and lead me to a soft place, a safe place your body. Ever so gently, you draw me down to where my cheek can experience the warmth of your skin and my ear can know your heartbeat. I can curl myself into you and be rocked, naked and newborn again.

Flesh to flesh, you teach my body to learn you and take you in. You stroke my hair and kiss my face, and we laugh. I laugh in joy and relief as we rub noses. I laugh to release my nervousness when you bat at my face with your breasts as I lie beneath you. Then I laugh with sheer pleasure in the game. Leaning against you in your lap, I can find a long-lost space inside myself where trust is safe and loving is not a foolish venture. How did you know? Was it in my eyes when you approached me, even as part of me shied away from you, a near stranger? You are not strange, and neither am I.

GLAAD RAP BY HARLOW RUSSELL

Hall of fame

GLAAD RAP is an occasional column passing on information from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), as published by GLAAD/New York. This year's Hall of Fame includes:

Joseph Fernandez, Chancellor of Schools, Board of Education, 110 Livingston St, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Five New York City districts have rejected the "Children of the Rainbow" curriculum because it includes recognition of lesbian- and gay-headed families. Fernandez has stood firm, demanding that any district which rejects the curriculum devise gay-inclusive alternatives. Send him a note of support!

Garth Brooks, c/o Liberty Records, 3322 West End Ave, Nashville, TN 37203. Brooks' new album *The Chase* includes a song titled "We Shall Be Free," which affirms that we'll be unshackled only "when we're free to love anyone we choose." Brooks says this is meant to include same sex couples; the song also addresses racism and other inhumanities. Write him a thank-you note!

The Whoopi Goldberg Show, c/o The Lippin Group, 230 Park Ave, Suite 550, New York, NY 10169.

Whoopi deserves your praise for campaigning against Colorado's anti-gay initiative and for using her new syndicated talk show to dispel stereotypes and promote inclusion. Elton John told Whoopi about being gay, his sham marriage, and how he finally found true love with a nice man. Elizabeth Taylor and k.d. lang have also been interviewed. Tell Whoopi how important it is to keep lesbian and gay issues upfront and on the air.

Viewer Response, WWOR, 9 Broad-cast Plaza, Secaucus, NJ 07094. This is the superstation which broadcasts *The Whoopi Goldberg Show*. Rumor has it that the station may give the show's 11 p.m. time slot to Rush Limbaugh, currently in the 1 a.m. slot. So write already.

Send copies of your letters to *The Empty Chest* and to GLAAD, 150 West 26th St, Suite 503, New York, NY 10001. For a contribution of at least \$5/year you can receive the *Bulletin*, for \$35/year you can be a member of GLAAD/New York.

THE ONLY WAY TO DEFEAT HOMOPHOBIA IS TO CONFRONT IT!

BY GLEN SEALNY

Gay vacations: where to be in '93

California - The West Coast
If you're looking to get away this year, read on, as I've outlined some wonderful vacation resorts that are ideal destinations for gay men and women.

The "West Coast" has always been a favorite vacation destination. Los Angeles, Palm Springs, West Hollywood and San Francisco are fantastic destinations for the gay traveler. Each city offers its own majestic charm that is both unique and exciting. One is great for a weekend get-away; combining two or more make for a fantastic week-long vacation.

If you enjoy driving, why not try the coastal highway between Los Angeles and San Francisco, which makes for a beautiful day trip. Please allow ample time to enjoy the breathtaking sights along the way. For those short on time, why not catch a flight between the two cities. You'll find numerous and affordable flights between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

To the South - Texas
For a destination that's out of the ordinary, why not try South Padre Island in Texas. This is a flourishing year-round vacation place located between the Gulf

of Mexico and Laguna Madre, near the mouth of the Rio Grande river and the Mexican border. Named the "International Island" of Texas, you'll find an excellent assortment of white sandy beaches that are ideal for the beach enthusiast, swimmer, surfer, or sunbather.

On the East Coast

Key West and Provincetown are the two most noted resorts on the East coast. Thousands of travelers flock to these destinations during the peak winter and summer months for the wonderful beaches, shopping, restaurants and night life. Guest houses fill up quickly (especially for the holiday weeks and theme weeks) so reservations are strongly suggested months in advance.

One of the newest and fastest growing winter vacation destinations is Miami Beach. Known as "South Beach," gay men and women have found paradise in the restored art deco district. Here you will find an abundance of vacationers from around the world enjoying the fine beaches and warm sunshine. South Beach offers numerous hotels and restaurants destined to please any traveler.

The Caribbean

The Caribbean is always a popular winter destination. The islands are very conservative, so don't expect to find a large gay presence. You will not find hotels or bars catering exclusively to the gay traveler. Most, however, are gay friendly. The Caribbean is a perfect place for a romantic getaway or for a relaxing week with some good friends.

Some suggestions on which islands to visit in 1993: I would recommend St. Thomas, St. Croix, or San Juan. The

letter will have the largest selection of gay accommodation and activities. You'll also find a small selection of gay-friendly places in the Dominican Republic, including and excellent all-women's villa.

For an all gay experience in the Caribbean, why not try one of RSVP Caribbean Seaspirit cruises of the US and British Virgin Islands, or an all-inclusive stay at Atlantis at Club Med. Both Olivia and Atlantis offer 1993 itineraries which include the Club Med villages in Playa Blanca and Sonora Bay Mexico and Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic.

For specific information and recommendations on where to be in 1993, please consult your local IGTA travel agent who would be happy to provide you with complete details.

BY ANDREW S. DUNN, ESQ.

What, no Health Care Proxy?

Has it really been more than a year and a half since I first graced these pages with the importance of a Health Care Proxy? Now, be honest, how many of you have one? That's right, raise your hands. That's what I thought. Why not?

I think I know the problem, and I have no idea how to solve it. It seems that people in good health (especially young people) do not want to think about a

time when they may not be in good health. How am I to combat apathy that reaches to the very core of a person's fears?

It is not surprising that most people do not want to write out a will. By writing a will we have to acknowledge that there will come a day when we will be dead. No one gets out of life alive. Once a person comes to realize this one simple fact, writing a will seems important and necessary. Of course, it seems to make no logical sense for one person to pay for services they will never see. The services of a written will, after all, are not realized until after you are dead.

I really do not mean to be so brutal and callous about death and illness, but my concern is that everyone be prepared so that they can exercise as much control after death as they exercised before death.

Now, if we can realize that a will is necessary (i.e. that death will happen), it stands to reason that many (but certainly not all) people will suffer some debilitating injury or illness sometime during their life. Why should s/he be less prepared for the illness that they must live with than they are for the distribution of material items after death?

The health care proxy allows every adult in New York State to determine who will make all medical decisions if that person is unable. I am continually astonished at the apathy that the gay and lesbian community has shown this document. For the cost of a few minutes' labor and thought, we, as a community and as individuals, can give some of the control to our lives that heterosexual couples are granted upon

Continued on next page

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Dear Mom + Dad -
You'll never believe this - I'm actually going to church! I've found a small group of lesbians and gay men who meet each week for worship. It's so good to be myself as I worship and to feel again that God really does love me!
Your loving child,

Open Arms
Metropolitan Community Church
875 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14605
(716) 271-8478
8:00 P.M.

The Gay and Lesbian Christian Church

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OUTLAW Continued from previous page marriage.

Perhaps not everyone is ready to accept that there are ways to circumvent the straight world and achieve similar positions of power in our own lives. For those of you who are ready, start with a health care proxy.

HOT FLASHES

By LILY RIVERS

Introducing...

This highly irregular column will note the latest in queer facts and fancies, amusing or weird news items, and other information that may not qualify for the "Newsfronts" section, but which is still of interest, or at the very least good for a laugh.

Our first February item comes from the great Lily (no relation) Tomlin, who is making a special gift offer to accompany her newly released set of videotapes. Not only do you get Ernestine Peak Experience, Lily for President, Lily Sold Out, Lily Tomlin Appearing Nudely, and The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe, you also receive "a valuable hairloom!"

Yes, a lock of Lily's own hair, "captured forever in a crystal-inspired plastic pendant." It even comes with a certificate of authenticity. Tomlin, who says the idea just came off the top of her head, can be reached at Tomlin and Wagner Theatricals, P.O. Box 27759, Los Angeles CA 90027-0759. Or you can call 1-800-GET LILY, or, if you prefer, fax 1-800-HAD LILY. Take advantage of this hair-raising offer and order while supplies last.

After watching your Tomlin videotapes, you can give your friends a good deal with two new card decks, the "Dyke Deck" and the "Queens Rule" deck (the latter



for both lesbians and you-know-who.) The traditional face cards have been replaced by "more appropriate personages," and the queen is the card with the highest face value. Moons, stars, women's symbols and labrys are the new suits. We can be sure that these decks at least won't be stacked against us.

The cards are \$7.50 plus \$1.50 shipping and handling, from Queens Rule Poker Club, P.O. Box 268383-GP, Chicago IL 60626. Interested wholesalers can call (312)463-2819.

Fans of Anne Seale and Sasha Hedley will be interested to learn that the two Rochester lesbian musicians were featured in January's Hotwire: the Journal of Women's Music and Culture, in an article entitled "On Working and Touring Together." Seale and Hedley's stirring anthem "Body Hair" is included on the disk which accompanies the magazine.

Seale notes in the interview that she got her start as a songwriter with the Rochester Lesbian Writers' Group (which is defunct at the moment.) "If I have



anybody to thank for encouragement," Seale says, "it's them." She and Hedley discuss the challenges of touring in a station wagon packed with people and equipment. "Pardon me if I mention it, Sasha," Seale says, "but you are no light packer." "At least I'm consistent," her

accompanist replies. The dynamic duo also talk about terrible sound systems ("Sometimes I could even hear the piano," Sasha says) and criticisms of the political content of some of their songs. For instance, although their song "Leather" is not about S/M, they were asked not to perform it at a southern concert as it might be taken to be pro-S/M, while in Michigan they were asked not to sing another song because of a line that might be taken to be "anti-discipline."

"I'm not anti-anything, I'm pro-humor," Seale says. The two conclude at the end of the interview that even though they don't agree on everything, and in spite of the pressures of touring, "we still like each other."

Seale and Hedley are not the only Rochesterians who received media notice lately. Joe Guagliardo, of Galaxy Hair, 1055 Hudson Ave., was featured recently in Passion: International Hair Magazine. Five of Joe's "big hair" designs for evening wear are shown in a full-page spread.

The magazine selects only the hottest international designs, so this represents a great compliment to Joe's creative talent.

Finally, on a more solemn note, a press release from PWA Daniel McQueen suggests that those wishing to show support for people with AIDS can display a blue candle in a window facing the street, to be lit every night until a cure is found. Daniel writes that this will help PWAs know that they are not alone, and "you cannot know how important that knowledge is." For more information or to volunteer, call Danny or Joan at Pride Path magazine in Buffalo, at 1-876-3881.



By Peter House

Holiday traditions

Tom often says my "gaydar" works overtime. He claims that I spot gay people everywhere I go. "You think everyone is gay?" he exclaimed a few weeks ago. Maybe I do identify people incorrectly sometimes, but my vigilance has paid off in some enriching and affirming experiences.

My "gaydar" was right during the holidays. While visiting a well known college town, I was browsing in a gift shop which specializes in hand-made crafts. There was a beautiful display of Christmas tree ornaments in one corner. The store was crowded with students shopping for gifts to take home.

I noticed two college-aged guys, obviously together, looking at the ornaments. My "gaydar" went off and I eavesdropped on them.

"I have to have this one," the taller guy said, pointing to a hand carved Santa Claus.

"We've got enough ornaments," responded the other.

"Please!" begged the first guy impishly. The other one smiled, "OK, but this is the last one. If we're going to visit your parents for Christmas, we've got to save more money."

I think I'm fairly safe in assuming that they're a couple. Being a romantic I couldn't help wondering about them. How did they meet? Do they live together? How long have they been together? Would this Christmas be the first visit to the in-laws?

By visiting their families together they are way ahead of most couples their age and lots of older more established couples too. They are investing in their

relationships and their future. They're investing in their families. I asked to have him look at the way I arranged the stockings because I wasn't sure how my family would react. But it's been well worth the risk I took.

Now I look forward to Christmas because my entire family is integrated. Tom and I have fun decorating our house. And now that we own our own home, I get a real sense of stability and tradition by putting the same decorations in the same place each year. The Christmas tree always goes in the same corner and is adorned by the same ornaments, many of them containing sentimental value. I always write all of the Christmas cards (even to his relatives) and he always figures out how to make the tree stand straight in its base. We are developing traditions together. We're making a history together. Shared experiences like these are what strengthens the bond between two people. And we don't have to exclude our families of origin in order to be together.

The young guys I overheard at the gift shop seem to have caught on early. They are putting their relationship in the proper perspective in the context of their families. If this was their first trip together to visit families for the holidays, there may have been some tense moments. But they are brave enough to integrate each other into the lives of their families. They are wise enough to invest in their future by building holiday memories and traditions together. We can all be inspired and empowered by their example.

At that point we hadn't fully accepted ourselves as a family. Christmas is the ultimate family holiday and neither of us could imagine spending it away from our families of origin — so we split up for it. We failed to recognize ourselves as a family until Christmas was over. But we learned a lot that year and vowed that we'd never spend holidays apart again.

Now we spend Christmas together with my family and visit his family together the day after. Tom has become an integral member of my family. My nieces and nephew view him as another uncle and my mother spends the same amount of money on Tom's Christmas gift as she does on my sister's husband. I was a little

over the top. I asked to have him look at the way I arranged the stockings because I wasn't sure how my family would react. But it's been well worth the risk I took.

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IN SEARCH OF SELF BY THOMAS FRONCZAK, ACSW, CAC

Sexual Self The safe-sex message alone is not working! People are still out there having unprotected sex. In this day and age when the media, schools, churches, and the president-elect are all promoting safer-sex practices and HIV/AIDS awareness, one wonders how this can occur. Self continued on p. 26

AIDS DIRECTORY Free testing for HIV exposure is available from New York State: call 1-800-541-AIDS (1-800-541-2437). Or, call the Rochester Area regional hotline for information, referral and support (716) 423-8081, ask for the HIV counselor. Other organizations which provide AIDS-related services are as follows: AIDS Rochester, Inc., 1350 University Ave., provides education, referrals to appropriate service agencies, client and family services, advocacy for people facing HIV-linked discrimination, and other services, including financial assistance and a public education speaker bureau. (716) 442-2200 V/TDD (business line) or (716) 442-2200 V/TDD (hotline). Helping People with AIDS, Inc. (HPA), P.O. Box 1543 Rochester NY 14603-1543 is a non-profit, volunteer organization. HPA raises and distributes funds to support programs that provide services to people living with HIV and AIDS. Funding is provided to agencies located in the counties of Monroe, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Livingston, Chemung, Steuben, Wayne and Yates. Hotline (716) 987-1853. Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley peer facilitators can provide referrals to physicians and service agencies. Person on duty Sunday/Friday 6:30-9:30 p.m. Message machine other times. (716) 244-8640. AIDS Coordination Project of Monroe County, run through Monroe County Department of Health and AIDS Institute of New York (State Department of Health) provides information, education and training, and maintains a resource library. Sue Cowell, (716) 274-6114 (V/TTY). Community Health Network, Inc. (CHN), 758 South Ave. Not-for-profit clinic specializing in early, aggressive medical care for people with HIV/AIDS. Investigational new drugs are made available to patients through clinical drug trials. Offers HIV testing and counseling to people who are unsure of their HIV status. The John Washburn Library is an educational resource and sponsors outreach programs like Safer Sex and Personal Health workshops; support groups for HIV positive men and women. You need not be a CHN patient to enroll in CHN clinical drug trials or to use the Library; social work and case management services. (716) 244-9000. Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency provides medical literature and newspaper clippings as well as demographic and statistical data for use in developing health care services. 461-3520. Greater Rochester AIDS Interfaith Network (GRAIN) provides lay and professional care through healing and memorial services; training of friendly visitors for visiting homes, hospitals, hospices and prisons; information about pastoral resources and advocacy on behalf of people affected by AIDS. (716) 889-8050. Monroe Community College maintains an AIDS Resource Library in the Leroy V. Good Library, 1000 E. Henrietta Rd. 424-5200. Monroe County Health Department, at 111 Westfall Road in Henrietta, offers testing and counseling for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. (716) 274-6146. Strong Memorial Hospital provides a complete range of HIV medical care, including access to experimental treatment protocols, and HIV testing. Also provides individual and group psychotherapy. Training of health care professionals also available. Infectious Disease Clinic, (716) 275-0526. Department of Psychiatry, (716) 275-3379. AIDS Training Project, (716) 275-5693. After AIDS, AIDS bereavement support group. Second and fourth Thursdays, AIDS Rochester, 1350 University Ave., 7:00-8:30 p.m. (716) 377-0332. Planned Parenthood of Rochester and Genesee Valley offers testing and information (716) 546-2595.



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GAY GROUPS

Rochester Lesbian And Gay Political Caucus

The Rochester Lesbian and Gay Political Caucus will be holding a series of overview discussions on the campaign at its monthly meeting on Feb. 18.

Sue Council, veteran of several local campaigns, including Assemblymember Susan John's '90 & '92 races, will be the guest speaker. She will discuss the structure of a campaign and the responsibilities of each segment. For example, how does a candidate raise the money needed to run a campaign? What is a field operation and why is it crucial to a victory? Who decides what issues are pursued and which are not? How important is polling?

This year's mayoral, city council, school board and county clerk races will offer limitless opportunities for local gay men and lesbians to get plugged in and see what a campaign is from the inside. Join us for the meeting and see where your talents might be put to good use. Or just come to satisfy any curiosity you might have had about how our elected officials really get elected.

The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave. For further information call Bill Pritchard at 251-7437.

Interfaith

Interfaith Advocates for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People is a group of activists from varying faiths which has been meeting on a regular basis for a year. The groups purpose is to provide advocacy for and improve communication of lesbian, gay and bisexual issue in a religious context.

Members of Interfaith Advocates, coming from a variety of traditions, represent either committees with a focus

on lesbian, gay and bisexual issues from different denominations or churches, individual congregations, or themselves.

The group's major concerns are advocacy in a religious context for understanding and justice concerning lesbian, gay and bisexual orientation, and networking among these working toward these goals.

Members of Interfaith Advocates for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People share a conviction of the inclusive and abiding nature of God's love for all. For more information call 663-9130.

Gay And Lesbian Overeaters

The Gay and Lesbian Overeaters Support group has started the new year off right! With trips planned to the supermarket for reading labels, and exercise days, and lessons on controlling and understanding overeating tendencies... we get outta breath! Join us on Sundays at 2 p.m. and welcome a brand new you! Call 342-0023 for more info.

Lutherans Concerned?

Is there any interest in forming a support/social group for gay Lutherans? Should we form a local chapter of "Lutherans Concerned?"

In February a dinner meeting will be held for the purpose of discussing these issues. For information and location, please contact Dick, P.O. Box 211, Penn Yan, N.Y. 14527 or call Tom at 461-5032.

Open Arms

"Gay relationships don't last" is a lie perpetuated by ignorance." On Feb. 14, Open Arms M.C.C.'s worship service will be a celebration of Relationship Sunday, an affirmation of fulfilling gay

and lesbian relationships, at 6 p.m., 875 E. Main St.

Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church welcomes David Berg and Jesse Schaefer, a gospel duo, on Feb. 21. The duo will be performing a variety of songs, including a new song, "I Am a Woman," which is a powerful statement of a woman's voice. This year's Feb. 14th worship service at Open Arms will begin at 8 p.m. on Feb. 24.

On Feb. 27, members and friends of Open Arms will gather for a night out. At 5:30 p.m., we will meet at Tony Roma's, 125 White Spruce Blvd., for dinner, and then attend the Rochester Women's Community Chorus concert at Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. Please call the church office, 271-8478, to make dinner reservations.

Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church is a faith community where gay and lesbian people are free to experience for themselves the presence, guidance and strength of God for their lives today. Worship services and activities are open to all, regardless of sexual orientation, gender, race or previous church/faith affiliation.

Weekly worship services begin at 6 p.m. on Sunday evenings at 875 East Main St. (Prince St. entrance). For a free brochure or further information about any activity, call 271-8478 or write Open Arms M.C.C., 875 East Main St., Rochester, 14605. Open Arms is a place to belong, a place to become!

Omega

Omega coffeehouses are held from September to June on the first Saturday of each month, from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. These coffeehouses give us a chance to meet informally for games, music, snacks, and conversation.

Omega is a state chartered organization committed to recognizing and meeting the unique needs of older gay men and women in the Rochester area. We welcome anyone who is interested in joining our organization. For more information, contact us at Omega, P.O. Box 10292, Rochester, N.Y. 14610-0292 or call Jan at (716) 223-1748 or Coedy (716) 924-1579.

Rochester Gay Men's Chorus

Rochester Gay Men's Chorus has begun preparation for our 10th Anniversary Concert on May 1, at Hochstein School of Music.

We are very pleased that our numbers are on the increase due mostly to the return of several former members. We welcome them back and are looking forward to our best concert ever.

On Feb. 14, (valentine's Day) RGMC, in conjunction with the Strasenburgh Planetarium, 657 East Ave., will present "Love Songs Among the Stars" at 5 p.m. preceded by a dessert reception at 4 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and are available by contacting the Chorus Line at 423-0650 or at the door.

It's never too late to join the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus! We rehearse every Tuesday evening at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St., at 7 p.m. There is no audition and musical training is not required! For more information please contact the Chorus Line at (716) 423-0650.

Rochester Gay Summer Theatre

Rochester Gay Summer Theatre has for a second year been the recipient of a grant from Arts for Greater Rochester. The grant will be used to produce two plays this summer.

With numerous options for the summer season, RGST will announce its seasonal plans in February, with auditions in March. Again this year we will be needing volunteers for publicity, mailings, stage help, concessions, costumes, as well as box office and volunteer coordination. For more information call 251-7098.

Women's Community Chorus and Creative Response Rochester

Two chorus groups, Rochester Women's Community Chorus and Creative Response Rochester, formerly the Peace Child Chorus, will combine to offer an evening of music promoting unity and harmony amongst people, called *Change The World Through Song*.

Downtown United Presbyterian Church (DUPC), 121 N. Fitzhugh St., will host the concert on Feb. 27 at 7:30 p.m. until 9 p.m.

The first half will be a separate performance from both choruses. The second half will present the choruses together.

Tickets are \$5 in advance and \$7 at the door. The event will be interpreted by Joy Duskin.

Creative Response Rochester is a chorus composed of children from 8 to 18 years of age. The group is a part of an international organization which sends children on international tours.

The most recent trip was to South Africa and involved white children and children of color. About 60 children have been part of the group.

The Rochester Women's Community Chorus will be traveling to New Haven, Conn. to participate in a joint concert with the New Haven Women's Chorus on March 27. They will be hosting a concert here in early May in exchange.

The Finger Lakes Gay and Lesbian Social Group

By Dick Nielsen
The Finger Lakes Gay and Lesbian Social Group continues to meet twice monthly, year round.

We held our annual Christmas-Thanksgiving Dinner with 75 people in attendance, and a wonderful time was had by all. New Year's Day we held our normal social.

We continue to grow with more and more new people every time. Come join us, you won't be disappointed. If you can, bring one refreshment item, i.e. a bottle of pop, a bag of chips, etc. As always our meeting location is known only to members. Further information by writing to Dick Nielsen, PO Box 211, Penn Yan, NY 14527 or by calling 315-536-7753 and asking for Sam Edwards.

Youth Group

There is a new group in town for gays ages 16-20 who need a place to talk about what it's like growing up gay.

The group is run by two professionally trained social workers in a respected human service agency. Topics will be determined by group interest, but could include coming out issues, acceptance of sexual orientation by self and others,

problems posed by a homophobic society, etc.

The group meets Tuesdays from 7:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. at Family Service of Rochester, 30 North Clinton Ave.

Group facilitators are Scott Miller, CSW, and Ray Voorheis.

For more information about the group or to join, please contact Scott Miller at (716) 232-1840.

Attention lesbians: there is a woman ready to start a lesbian support group if there is interest. Please contact Scott Miller at the above number for more information.

Out and About

Out and About is a volunteer organization which is committed to the enrichment of the quality of life of lesbians, gay men, and their friends in the Rochester area through healthy activities. With your involvement and creative imagination, Out and About can continue to offer exciting opportunities to share the great outdoors with one another. Our newsletter, "Lifesigns," is published quarterly and available at a subscription rate of \$12 per person (checks made payable to Out and About). For more information, please write to: Out and About, c/o GAGV, 179 Atlantic Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14607. See you Out and About.

This year's New Year's Party, which was held at the Gay Alliance, was a smashing success (and fun, too)! A big thanks goes out to all who attended and helped in planning Out and About's 1993 calendar of events. We've got some new stuff planned for the new year, along with some of the good old stand-bys. Our Unity Picnic is May 23 in Mendon Ponds; mark your calendars! Through the end of this month, Out and About will continue with cross-

country skiing in Durand Eastman Park each Sunday at 11 a.m.; weather permitting (excluding Feb. 21). On Feb. 20, Out and About will be traveling to Genesee County Park (Lake Erie snow-belt region) for a day of cross-country skiing. All skill levels are cordially invited. If interested in any of these events, give Bob Stear a call at 473-9384.

The fourth of four women-only downhill ski trips to Bristol is set for Feb. 2. This is a new event for Out and About, and interested parties should contact Renelle at 232-2999.

Another women-only event (will wonders never cease) is the Adirondacks Women's Weekend, Feb. 5-7. Come relax in a Victorian lodge located on Fourth Lake near Old Forge, N.Y. This is a weekend for skiing, sledding, reading and game playing by the fire, shopping, skating or snuggling with your sweetie to stay warm. This is a terrific, low-budget getaway for anyone who likes the outdoors (or at least wants to beat the winter blahs!) Call Sue or Beth at 244-7159 for fees and more information.

This month's potluck social is Feb. 21. Bring a dish to pass and prepare to enjoy a leisurely afternoon eating and talking (and share a laugh or two). RSVP Jim at 288-0403. Also, we need a host/hostess for the March potluck social on March 20 (contact Fred at 336-9158).



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Self continued from p.23

UNPROTECTED SEX WITH AN HIV INFECTED PARTNER CAN KILL! HIV INFECTION USED TO BE BY CHANCE, NOW IT'S BY CHOICE!

I am aware that the majority of persons, gay and non-gay, are aware of this fact. Yet why are people still engaging in unsafe sex practices? Low self-esteem!

I am not here to claim I have all the answers. I am here solely to inspire. As gay people we have bought into the shaming messages that gay is bad, wrong, amoral, less-than, and pathological. When has it been alright to be gay? Growing up as a gay person, how many of us were able to say, "Hey mom and dad, guess what? There's this gorgeous boy in my class that I'm really attracted to," or how many of you were able to stare at the cute quarterback without fear of getting caught?

Probably not many. This was usually something feared and kept to ourselves. We inherently knew, even as children, that to be different was to be wrong. This is about taking on an identity of shame. In time this gets generalized to, not simply gay is wrong, but I am wrong.

If I am less-than and "worth-less" than a non-gay person, then I may feel I need to please others for acceptance. How else can I fit in if I don't do for others? After all, what is my worth? There is a constant apologizing for being gay. Do you hear the pain in this? I cannot be me! I must give the world what it is they expect. Gay men and women are superb at acting or

passing (as straight). It truly becomes a survival skill.

I am not pathologizing such behavior. I will never find a gay man or lesbian wrong for doing what he or she had to in order to survive. I simply point out that in suppressing self, we send an unconscious message to ourselves that "I am not OK." This plays directly into a devalued sense of self.

What I have come to recognize now is that some individuals with lessened self-esteem have a lesser desire to engage in safer-sex practices because they perceive there is no self of importance to protect. If someone with low self-esteem encounters someone who is "drop dead fucking gorgeous," who do you think has the power and control in that relationship? Often the individual with a lessened sense of self respect will turn over his will to the other ("so that he won't leave me.")

Recently I worked with an individual who told me about an encounter with his "fantasy man." This encounter included unprotected oral and anal sex (both passive and active). This is a bright, 35-year-old professional businessman, who knows all about safer sex practices. How was it that this night he could take such a gamble, endangering self and other?

When I asked "Michael" how this could happen, even when he was not drinking, he said "To be with this guy made me feel important, accepted, and loved." I realized we were dealing with something much deeper than a need for education about safer sexual practices.

We have internalized the negative messages about our sexuality from the

outer homophobic world. If we believe that gay is wrong, that gay men are lonely second-class citizens, and gay relationships can't work, we have bought into an external heterosexual myth about gay sexuality.

How many people have had parents sit down and talk to them about gay sexuality as children? It just doesn't happen. We learn about gay sexuality from gay porn (videos or magazines). Here we see gorgeous men with flawless facial features and the perfect size penis (or course we learn to believe this must be at least eight-plus inches).

All we really see is repetition. The same acts, over and over. There is no creativity. Intimacy is not understood or included. There is no expression of self. There is no variety. The same positions are used over and over. It becomes nothing more than an act. When I am acting, then "I," my real Self, is not showing up at the meeting between the two. Sex becomes a ritual or a role that I play to please my partner, versus myself. I do what THEY do on the videos because this is all I know. It is what is expected of me.

Does this sound familiar? I act how society expects me to act. I hide the parts of me that society expects me to hide. I perform sexually the way I think I am supposed to. It's all unreal. There is no essence here of who I am as an individual. I am no longer being moved by my feelings or experience, but by a pre-scripted role I have chosen to play, chosen often due to lack of awareness of alternatives and of my own sexual being.

Look at all the places gay men connect to have sex: bars, bathhouses, gyms, parks,

public rest rooms, 900 numbers. These situations are surrounded with anonymity. There is no SELF that shows up. Just repetitious, anonymous, empty sexuality. One can only wonder about the feelings of self after such empty experiences. And where is the concern for others? It is interesting to consider how this may play into unsafe sex practices.

The key here is to live consciously, and to be aware of who you are as an individual. I'm not even going to focus on the term gay, because that is simply a label, which tells us about a category of people but never about you. How important it is to be aware of who you are, what you need and want. What feels OK and not OK, and what your interests are. How important it is to your SELF.

You are a sexual being, an individual. There will never be another person on this earth quite like you. That is amazing. Allow yourself to show up at the meeting of you and your partner(s). Be aware that sexuality is not just about genitals, or having sex. It is about an inner experience, which honors all sexual feelings.

Intimacy does not come from sex. It never has and it never will. Sex is sex. But sex may come from intimacy. There is much to write on this topic, and I will continue next month.

Thomas Fonczak ACSW, CAC is a NYS licensed social worker in the fields of chemical dependency, recovery, sexuality concerns, and HIV infection. He can be contacted care of The Empty Closet, 179 Atlantic Ave., Rochester, NY 14607-1255, and will answer your questions in future columns.

Local news continued from p. 7
Andrew Dunn receives Outstanding Young Lawyer award

Andrew S. Dunn, a Rochester attorney, was nominated for the 1992 Outstanding Young Lawyer of the Year Award. This award is presented each year by the New York State Bar and works in an area of the law that helps others and benefits society.

Dunn, who currently works at Main West Attorneys at Law, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation which provides legal services to the working poor, is being recognized for his commitment to Main West, as well as his frequent contribution to publications such as the *Empty Closet*. He is also chairman of the board of the Gay and Lesbian Alternative Social (GLAS), and a board member at the Faith Community Health Awareness Center. Dunn is also a member of the New York Bar Association's Special Committee on AIDS and the law.

Daniel Holland named as CHN director; will run administration

Daniel J. Holland of Rochester has been named executive director of Community Health Network, Inc. (CHN), 758 South Ave., the not-for-profit medical center providing care to people with HIV and AIDS.

Margaret M. Clark, president of CHN's board of directors, said that Holland will be responsible for the administration of the organization's \$1.3 million budget and a staff of 25.

"Dan's considerable experience and talent will lead CHN in the second decade of the HIV epidemic," said Dr. Bill Valenti, founder and medical director of CHN.

Holland comes to CHN with over 10 years of experience as the financial administrator of the Rochester Mental Health Center at the Rochester General Hospital. He was a Captain in the U.S. Air Force, and is a graduate of St. John Fisher College.

"In the Face of AIDS" accompanies GEVA play about father, son

GEVA Theatre announces the exhibition, "In The Face Of Aids III," running from Feb. 15 through March 20, in conjunction with their production "The Sum Of Us", a play about the relationship between a father and his gay son.

The exhibition is curated by David Kwasigroh and features visual art and poetry by regional and national artists. Included in the exhibition are Kristine Bouyoucos, Rochester (xerox, collage); Pamela Hawkins, Rochester (mixed media); Robert Flynt, New York City (photography); David Kwasigroh, Newark, N.Y. (photography); Laura Migliorino, Minneapolis (mixed media); Michelle Oosterbaan, Rochester (painting); John Paradiso, Albany (mixed media); David Pruden, Rochester (photography).

For further information about the exhibition please call David Kwasigroh at 315-331-8217.

Workshop set on nutrition for HIV positive people

Jackie Cannizzaro, a cooking instructor from the Rochester Museum and Science Center, will present a food demonstration for HIV positive people and people with AIDS on Feb. 13, from 10 a.m. to noon at Incarnate Word Lutheran Church, corner of Goodman and East Ave.

The cost is \$2 (includes light lunch). Pre-registration by Feb. 11 is required. The event is sponsored by Nutritional Resource Group. For more information and to register, please call 244-6065.

A letter from Gov. Cuomo to gay and lesbian community

Dear Friends:
On Monday Dec. 7, I had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the gay and lesbian community from throughout the State. I found the meeting to be extremely useful and informative.

The meeting took place as we continue preparations for a new year. In less than a month, I will announce my legislative agenda for 1993. As promised at the meeting, I will include the civil rights bill in the State of the State and

will continue to aggressively pursue its passage by the legislature.

Many other important issues were discussed at the meeting. These included: gay and lesbian youth; bias crime; AIDS funding; insurance; family diversity; adoption and foster care; etc. We will be reviewing all items and will provide the community with regular updates on what follow-up is undertaken.

As always, I urge you to communicate with your ideas on issues of importance. I will value your input.
Sincerely,
Mario M Cuomo

Leather Fantasy night at Saint will benefit AIDS Rochester

A Leather Fantasy Night will take place at the Saint, 171 St. Paul St., on Feb. 5.

There will be a donation of \$5. Proceeds will go to AIDS Rochester. Three leather organizations, from Rochester, Syracuse and Buffalo, will take part in the evening.



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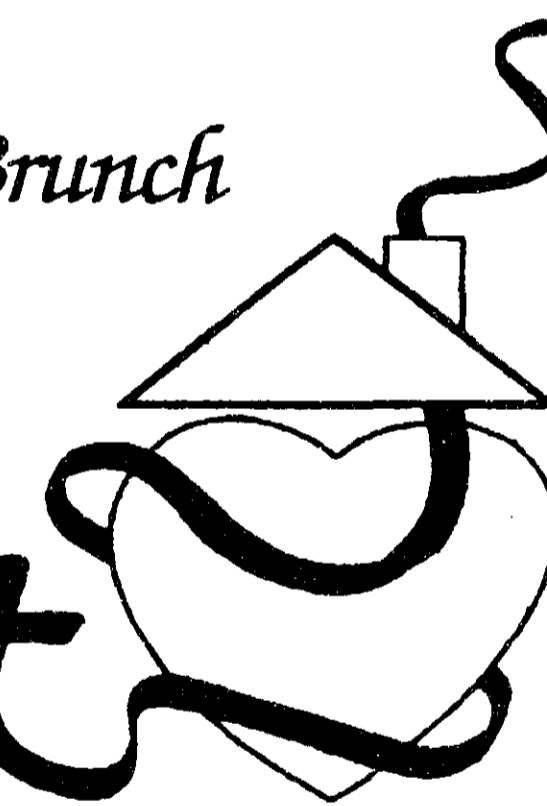
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