

THE EMPTY CLOSET

LOCAL
NEWS BRIEFS

SUNY Brockport students protest handling of hate crime

A gay and lesbian student organization at SUNY Brockport held a rally on April 22 to protest administration handling of a hate crime on campus.

Anti-gay slogans were scrawled on the office of the Brockport Legal Information Service between March 10 and March 11. The Office is a student committee providing free legal services to students.

"Kill the fag" was written on the office door, and "All fags must die. You will die." was written across the windows. A note was slipped under the door which read, "You must die. You are killing us."

The Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Student Association (GLBSA), which is located down the hall, was not notified of the incident. President Kim Smith was eventually contacted by the student newspaper, the *Sylbus*.

The April 22 rally drew around 50 people.

Brian Roesch of GLBSA told the *Empty Closet* that the protest was meant to question why, as Roesch put it, "the incident was swept under the rug."

The rally focused on how hate crimes affect everyone. It was sponsored by Students Against Bias-Ruled Environment (SABRE), a coalition of GLBSA, student Jewish and African American groups, and other groups who are affected by hate crimes.

"We felt an attack on one minority is an attack on all," said Kim Smith, president of GLBSA.

If nothing happens with the investigation, Roesch said, GLBSA will consider asking for the resignation of Public Safety Director Dave Gaylord.

Roesch said there had been no further threats. He added, "Basically, it's not a priority for campus public safety, and the president of GLBSA couldn't ask them any questions because the investigator assigned to handle the incident went on vacation."

The university says that since the incident, the public safety department has been patrolling the basement of the student union where the offices in question are located. Ed Kelly, assistant to the president, who addressed the rally, said that the college has been keeping files on hate crimes for the past five years.

—Some information from Donna Jackel, *Times-Union, Democrat & Chronicle*

Interfaith service to honor Nazis' victims

Interfaith Advocates for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People is sponsoring a religious service to remember the persecution of gay men and lesbians under the Nazi regime, to be held on May 19 at 7:30 p.m., at the First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Road South.

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Around 10,000 people saw the NAMES Project Memorial Quilt at the U. of Rochester last month. Coverage begins on p. 8. Photo by Doug Meszler.

City Council passes domestic partnership; will OK registration, benefits for city employees

By Susan Jordan

The atmosphere was tense in the City Council chamber on April 12 as the role call of Council members proceeded. After a long, emotional evening of debate, the Council passed the domestic partnership bill, and the crowded room erupted with cheers and a standing ovation.

Both parts of the legislation, registration for city residents and health benefits for the domestic partners of city employees, were approved. Mayor Bill Johnson said that he will sign the measure as soon as it arrives on his desk.

Council members Lois Geiss (president), Tim Mains (co-sponsor of the bill), Michael Fernandez, Brian Curran (co-sponsor) and Maxine Childress Brown all voted yes on both parts of the legislation. Wade Norwood and Ben Douglas voted yes on benefits and no on registration. Gary Muldoon and John Stevenson voted no on both.

Bill Pritchard, president of the Rochester Lesbian and Gay Political Caucus, said, "We are very pleased at the victory and the bravery people exhibited in supporting this historic legislation. It's certainly a step in the right direction for Rochester, and I hope many companies will follow suit."

"I was disappointed that it wasn't a unanimous vote," Pritchard said. "On issues of fair and equitable treatment votes should be unanimous. We thank the City Council members who supported the legislation."

The basic requirements to register as domestic partners are that the partners be 18 or over, intend to live together and have done so for six months, are financially independent, have represented to others that they are domestic partners, intend to remain each other's sole partner and are committed to the physical, emotional and financial care and support of each other. Such couples can register with the City

Clerk for a \$25 fee, as soon as the law is signed by the Mayor.

The long list of people who addressed the Council included 14 opponents of the bill, some of whom expressed extreme hatred of lesbian and gay people. Many opponents raised financial concerns, but of those, only one or two did not also make statements indicating homophobic prejudice.

John Szewczyk said, "God disapproves of this kind of relationship... What would be the message to our children to say we approve of the homosexual lifestyle and of living together, which used to be called shacking up... Times have changed. Things have degraded... If any of you (Council members) have any regard for God — I can't imagine that *all* of you are atheists — are any of you affiliated with a church? Just because one church (Downtown United Presbyterian Church) is run by homosexuals, doesn't mean that's the voice of THE church... Let's not ascribe civil rights to this."

Bernie Decker asked Council not to equate gay relationships with marriage, since that would violate "Christian values." He was hissed and booed when he referred to gay relationships as "these more transient relationships."

Barbara Fredericks equated gay and lesbian people with "primordial darkness" and "evil." She said that moral values are absolute for eternity, and claimed, "There are millions of deaths because of sodomy."

Jan Fredericks screamed, "Domestic partnership is the legitimization of *perverse lust!* These people chose what they did! ... We closed the bath houses in New York City and now we're opening one in City Hall."

The Rev. Oliver Howard, in expressing his opposition, made the often-used hate-group reference to "Adam and Steve," and said that sexuality is for re-

production.

Most of the others who spoke against the bill used almost identical arguments about "family" and "morality," or said that to give health benefits to partners of city employees would be too expensive; one person suggested the cost might run to a million dollars. Adrian Burke asked, "Is it fiscally responsible for this body to pass legislation that is ultimately going to cost the taxpayers more money?"

Eighteen people spoke in favor of the bill. Isabelle Morrison of Downtown United Presbyterian Church said, "Through history, there have been many different configurations of people that make up a family. The legislation would merely recognize the reality out there and extend justice and some means of equality to the people who work for the city." She said that some churches recognize

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Geeta Cammermeyer (back, fourth from left), student names and faculty at U.R. See page 13.

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EDITORIAL

No promo homo

By Susan Jordan
A frequent strategy of the religious right is to oppose gay rights initiatives as attempts to "promote the homosexual lifestyle." Setting aside the offensive use of "lifestyle" to trivialize our lives, let's look at the concept of "promotion."
Just this month in the House of Representatives, the minions of the right tried to propose a sweeping amendment to an education funding authorization bill which would have banned all schools from providing any form of education or counseling which "promotes the homosexual lifestyle."

us whose beliefs come from different traditions are still "immoral," and our secular rights are still denied, if we do not conform to fundamentalist Christian beliefs. Our only "moral" alternative, then, is to renounce love and sexuality, and to live dosed lives of fear, lies, isolation and self-hate. Don't ask, don't tell, don't breathe. Morality — or bigotry?
How did struggling for our civil and human rights become promoting our sexuality? And what is this monolithic "lifestyle" which we are supposedly promoting, anyway? It depends on which politician, radio talk show host or TV evangelist you listen to, but the general idea is that we are all warped predators and molesters who are intent on tearing down Western Civilization and replacing it with some kind of Satanic teardrop/bath house theme park — nestled closely by the heavily-guarded perimeters of the dreaded Lesbian Nation, a sort of Michigan Women's Music Festival gulag.

heterosexual — grow up bombarded with mixed messages.
The first message is that sex is the be-all and end-all of human experience, the ultimate fulfillment of all our needs, as shown by the advertising and entertainment industries, and the straight male "sexual revolution," epitomized by *Hustler* and Howard Stern.

This extreme emphasis on sex is the inevitable outcome of centuries of the opposite extreme of total repression: i.e., sex is dirty and can only take place in the dark after the rite of heterosexual marriage; any reference to sex in literature or art must be censored, etc. These medieval attitudes are part of religious dogma and therefore part of everything most people hold sacred. So they must be correct...

It is not surprising that we find American society in the '90s bouncing off the two opposing walls of total permission and total repression. Society, it seems, can't deal with *heterosexuality*, never mind homosexuality. The latter, since it is not engaged in for reproduction, must be purely for pleasure, about which we have such ambivalent attitudes, and so it has come to symbolize everything that is "permissive."

The alternative proposed by the right is of course everything that is repressive: a return to the Good Old Days of hating our bodies, cruelly punishing women who are sexual outside marriage, refusing to educate children responsibly, and of course demonizing those terrible gay men and lesbians who break all the rules by "choosing" to love each other.

No wonder the radical right has had so much political and financial success in whipping up the innate fear of those who are "different." They are doing what right wing extremist Adolf Hitler did — taking advantage of ancient prejudices to

scapegoat a traditionally oppressed group, a group that the public already hates and is eager to blame for everything that is wrong with society. Even our liberal "allies" declare that, although they oppose discrimination, they are stalwart supporters of traditional morality and would never "promo homo."

To allow us to speak and exist openly would be to admit that sexual diversity is a basic part of human nature. Merely to say that we are human beings is to "promote" our brand of sexuality. It's as if we were running a massive ad campaign urging kids to "Try New Improved Homosexuality instead of boring old Compulsory Heterosexuality."

"We recruit," say the Lesbian Avengers with humorous intent. But we can't "recruit" or "convert" or "cure" anyone who has no desire for a same-sex lover. Even if we wanted to try. Those who prey on the young are found as often (or more often) among heterosexuals as among gays. But, as usual, fear is stronger than reason, especially when access to sound information is limited.

What power there is in words, and how successful the radical right has been in twisting them to mean their opposite. "Family" is sacred, but lesbian and gay families are "not real." Denial of the human right of choice to women, the sources of life, becomes being "pro-life." Right wing death squads become "freedom fighters," while impoverished farmers become "terrorists." Equal rights for gays becomes "special rights."

And of course all these perversions of language were created by highly-paid advertising experts hired to promote the religious right's agenda of hatred, discrimination and lies.

Our challenge is to convince society that all we are "promoting" is justice.

LOCAL & STATE NEWS

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The event will be free, open to the public and will be interpreted for the hearing impaired. A reception will follow.

Interfaith Advocates feel that it is necessary to educate and remind people of the horror that took place during the Nazi regime, and let them know why these triangles have become international symbols. The group feels it is important to remind people of the horrible consequences of fear and hatred towards a minority group. "For the dead and the living we must bear witness," is a theme of the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

Mayor William Johnson is expected to attend, as well as many clergy, and the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus and Nayim will participate.

For more information, call any of the following people who are members of Interfaith Advocates: Kevin Elphick: 442-8182; Nancy Eckerson Fitts: 381-4846; Neil Houghton: 624-4225; The Rev. Roger Reed: 293-1665.



Above: Kari Finn and Susan Howard in "Ladies on the Couch"

Monroe Com. College plans Diversity Day

Monroe Community College, in an effort to lessen the difficulties students feel in overcoming issues of ethnic, religious and sexual diversity, is sponsoring an all-day event on May 7.

The day "will include speakers, workshops, food, crafts, literature, and entertainment," according to Sylvaine Logeais, a member of the Diversity Day Committee.

Wilma Ellis from the United Nations will speak on "The Status of Women Worldwide," and Congresswoman Louise Slaughter will discuss "The Status of Women in the United States."

The day will also feature speakers from the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, the Urban League, To Reach and Inform About Developmental Disabilities, and the Islamic Center.

Other events will include dance performances, musical performances, art exhibits, film and video showcases, and an obstacle course, all exploring different areas of diversity.

One of the main events will be a production from Chicago called "Ladies on the Couch," billed as an "uncensored two-woman comedy that explores the simple lives of two gay women." The show is directed by Susan Messing and stars Kari Finn and Susan Howard, who "explore relationships in a light-hearted and wholesome manner, using a series of vignettes and songs." It will take place at 4 p.m. in the MCC Theater. The two actresses come from the Annoyance Theater in Chicago.

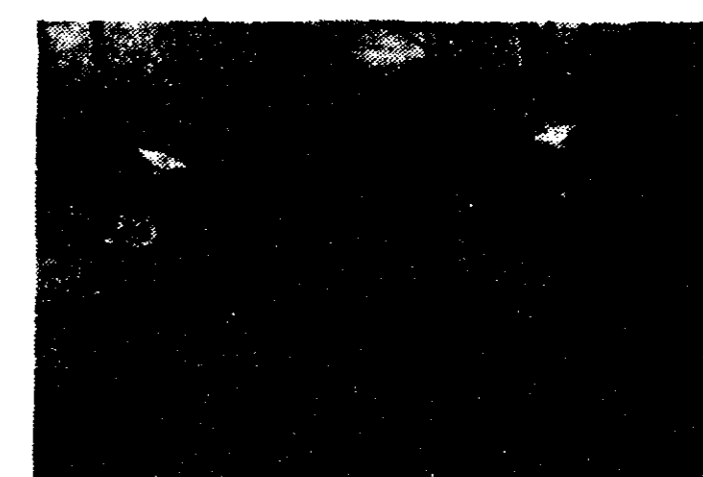
Diversity Day at Monroe Community College will be held on May 7 from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., in the area surrounding the MCC Theater. All activities, admission to the event, and parking are free. Donations will be accepted to benefit the Open Door Mission. For a complete listing of events call Ken at 359-8761.

Cris Williamson, Tret Fure to perform May 22

Cris Williamson and Tret Fure, two of independent music's most popular recording and performance artists, will celebrate the release of "Postcards from Paradise," their first duo album, with a concert to benefit the University of Rochester's Pediatric HIV Unit, and in the Best Interests of the Children (ITBIC), the nonprofit volunteer pediatric AIDS organization they helped found.

The concert, which will feature the

Rochester Women's Community Chorus, takes place on May 22 at 7 p.m. at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. Tickets are \$20 for general admission and \$50 for reserved seating and a post-concert reception with the artists. Tickets are available at Silkwood Books, Rochester Custom Leather, the Monroe Avenue Village Green Bookstore, or by calling (716)235-9336.



Above: Gin Shear and Sue Slate, organizers of the Women's Motorcycle Festival.

Women's Motorcycle Festival set for July 18-22 at Radisson Inn

Women should be having fun, and they definitely deserve the best Working on those two premises, organizers Gin Shear and Sue Slate are hosting Women's Motorcycle Festival '94 in posh surroundings. The newly appointed Radisson Inn, just south of Rochester, will be home for five days and four nights to "Modern Day Cowgirls" and their chrome and metallic steeds.

To ensure optimum conditions, Sue and Gin have picked the best weather week for upstate New York, the third week in July.

The schedule is jam-packed with rides, events, workshops and entertainment. Six different group rides will offer destination points to suit a variety of tastes, from those who like to play the ponies, to those who compete in Splatball, to those who are museum buffs, beach bums, or shopping fanatics! An ice-cream social will precede the Parade Run, offering dessert BEFORE dinner.

Competition will focus around two main events, the "Dice Run Round-up" and the "All Cowgirl Riding Rodeo." The Dice Run is a rolling trivia event involving a prescribed route with checkpoints. The Rodeo involves slow speed competitive events for solo and two-up riders. The focus is on fun, but your riding skills do get tested. Historically, the competition has been hot and heavy as well as supportive of each rider's efforts.

Added to these two main competitive events will be some other on-campus activities, such as the Tug of War designed to vent a little friendly rivalry among the owner groups of different brands of motorcycles: Harley, BMW, Kawasaki, Suzuki, Honda, Yamaha, and others. A Tattoo Fashion Show will be held at the pool. The Annual "Best In Show" will have women polishing their scooters up for presentation in four categories: Stock, Custom, Vintage and Rat.

Workshop selections will cover a variety of motorcycle related topics. If you want to tune up your riding techniques, certified Motorcycle Safety Foundation instructors will be facilitating workshops on turning, braking and swerving. Should

you have motorcycle-related technical questions or concerns, a motorcycle mechanic will be on hand to teach you how to troubleshoot your bike. There will be a workshop on "Touring Arctic Regions" and one on "Group Riding Techniques," to name a few of the many choices.

Entertainment will include The "Moving Vibrations" and Lynette on Monday; Diane Amos, a comedian from the San Francisco area, on Tuesday night, along with cabaret performer Lyn Lavner; blues and country rock singer Kathryn Warner and guitarist Sandy Ayala on Wednesday, along with Kathy Martin, a country-western DJ, who will get women up on their feet for some two-steppin', and on Thursday, the "Bad Dog, No Biscuit Band" and Leah Zicari will round out the entertainment.

"Modern Day Cowgirls" is the theme with a purpose for this year's festival. In 1993, WMF initiated a fund raising effort on behalf of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. As a result of the Women's Arctic Tour, the efforts of several motorcycle clubs and many individual contributors, over \$20,000 was raised for breast cancer research.

The festival will be the official kick-off for the next phase, a "Pony Express Ride for Research" campaign. As modern day cowgirls, we can become women riding for research aboard our steel ponies. WMF will be sponsoring a ride that will circumnavigate the perimeter of the U.S. in 1996. The Charity/Parade Run, at WMF '94, will serve as the kick-off activity for this campaign.

For information, write to W.M.F., 7 Lent Ave., LeRoy, N.Y. 14482 or call (716)-768-6054. See you in July.

Gay Filmmakers' Series to feature Gregg Bordowitz on May 14

Filmmaker and media activist Gregg Bordowitz will speak and screen his new film, *Fast Trip, Long Drop* at the Visual Studies Workshop Media Center, 31 Prince Street, on May 14 at 8 p.m.

Fast Trip, Long Drop is a "touching personal diary of Bordowitz, who is afflicted with AIDS, and shows how the disease has influenced him as a video artist and political activist. The documentary freely mixes autobiographical musings on daily existence with AIDS, his Jewish identity and family life, and the joys and sorrows of political involvement," according to Emanuel Levy of *Variety*.

Robert Hawk of Sundance Film Festival wrote, "Bordowitz embraces all of this with a personal vision that is playful, passionate, angry, smart and sassy (with some klezmer music thrown in to top it off). Ultimately, he has given us a courageous work of art."

Bordowitz's visit is co-sponsored by the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley and The Visual Studies Workshop Media Center as part of a continuing series which seeks to present the best in contemporary filmmaking as well as address issues in "Queer Media and Representation." Bordowitz's visit is made possible with additional support from The Film/Video Arts Film Bureau, which is funded by the New York State Council on the Arts.

LETTERS

Lioness Pride is for straight women too

To The Editor:

Thank you for giving our motorcycle club, Lioness Pride, coverage in the April issue of the *Empty Closet*. We are also appreciative of the space the Gay Alliance Community Center allows us to use for our meetings.

However, for future reference, please note one point of clarification. Lioness Pride is a women's motorcycle club open to ALL women: lesbian, bisexual, and straight. Our focus is on creating opportunities for all women to enjoy the avocation of motorcycling. Featuring our club

under the banner "Gay Groups" in the April issue of the *Empty Closet* might suggest that some women are not welcome or that our membership is exclusively lesbian. Neither assumption would be correct. All women are welcome.

Anyone interested in knowing more about our club or our May 14 meeting can contact me at (716)768-6054. Leave a message if I'm not around. I will return the call.

Again, thank you for your support and for this opportunity to delineate our membership philosophy.

Sincerely,
Sue Slate
President, Lioness Pride Motorcycle Club

THE EMPTY CLOSET

is available at...

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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, stories, poetry, ads, photographs or any mail or person to the *Empty Closet* office by the 15th of the month (photos and captions clearly side by the 20th). Design services for non-camera ready ads 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., an equal opportunity 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 entire community. We must be careful to present all viewpoints in a way that takes into consideration the views of all — women, men, people of color, 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,

nor 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, racist or homophobic will be refused; advertisements from organizations that are racist, sexist, racist, 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 taped permission from that person.

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Partnership continued from p. 1 and bless same sex unions, while some oppose gay rights in a violent way. "To Downtown United Presbyterian Church," she said, "God's love and justice are required of us."

The Rev. Merry Mead, an Episcopal priest, said, "When I was born I was given many gifts by God, including heterosexuality. I married and have been covered by my husband's insurance. My brother was also given many gifts by God, including his homosexuality... He found a partner and has lived with the same man for 12 years. He has never been covered nor has his partner. The situation is patently unfair. Speaking as a parish priest, for my parish and for the Homophile Committee of the Episcopal Diocese, I ask you to support this legislation."

Don Zeigler of the Lesbian and Gay Caucus of the All People's Congress said that anti-discrimination protection is not special privileges. "The only ones who want that," he said, "are the fundamentalists who want to thrust their views down the throats of the community... Don't let the fanatical ravings of a bigoted minority determine public policy."

The Rev. Richard Gilbert of the First Unitarian Church listed three issues he had heard opponents of the bill express. To the charge that the measure would be "unbiblical," Gilbert noted that Jesus never mentioned sexuality, much less forbade homosexuality. To the concerns about cost, Gilbert replied, "Four-one-hundredths of one percent of the city budget is not too high a price for equality."

To the claim that partnership would undermine the family, Gilbert said, "The typical American family is no more... I

have counseled many other kinds of families... Same sex relationships are not recognized, but they are spiritual unions nonetheless." He ended by saying, "This is a simple matter of justice."

Larry Champoux said that since the deaths of his parents he has had the opportunity to look back at his family and the lessons he learned from them. "My parents through their long marriage taught me many values — community service, perseverance and respect for individuals. I believe my family accepted me for who I am, and that was the best lesson of all. This is not moral degradation, nor destruction of society, but because I care about a person and a person cares about me. I was taught that by my parents and I think it's good for everyone."

Lloyd Grey, president of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, referring to Rev. Merry Mead's statement, said that he had been given the gifts of both heterosexuality and homosexuality. He said that he was married to a woman for 20 years and understands the need for public recognition of relationships.

Grey said, "Now I am in a long-term, committed relationship with a man... We had our union blessed by a Christian minister and I hope that union lasts forever, because it is a loving relationship, and there is no difference between heterosexual and homosexual loving relationships."

Susan Cowell, representing the Empire State Pride Agenda, said that the group had been involved in passing the New York City domestic partnership bill. "Many of the same arguments heard here tonight were heard in New York," she said. "In spite of these concerns, heterosexuals in New York City have

not stopped getting married."

Cowell added, "If you were shocked by what you've heard here tonight, I and many others have to live with that hatred every day of our lives." She said that given the state society is in today, "I see no logical reason not to celebrate any partnership that agrees to love, honor and cherish."

David and Sally Whitbeck of the Unitarian Church's Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Task Force spoke together. David Whitbeck said, "We must show the bigots that we will not tolerate their Nazi-like behavior in our community."

Andrew Lee told the Council that Rochester has the opportunity to join a growing number of communities which have domestic partnership. He said, "Already, more than 70 major American corporations offer these benefits — organizations which represent the very fabric of America."

Pam Barnak, accompanied by her partner Libby Ford and their children Emily and Caitlin, said, "While Emily and Caitlin are my biological children, Libby has been their parent since the beginning... Now, through adoption, she is their legal parent. Official recognition provided our family with tangible and intangible benefits... If possible my partner and I will register, then celebrate with friends and store those 'Kodak moments' for posterity."

Jeffrey Young noted that Webster's Dictionary does not define "family" as units of either heterosexuals or gays, but just people. He said that if the bill should be passed, "the family will persist as a loving group of individuals under one roof."

Dr. Paula Rust said that she and her

partner had recently celebrated their 10th anniversary. "We would like to take responsibility for each other and the relationship," she said. "I am paying for benefits for other people, but I am not getting equal rights."

Gregory Franklin said, "I happen to be heterosexual, and that gives me a lot of benefits. I am married and covered by my wife's insurance, and have those tangible and intangible benefits. I want to recognize the courage it took for people to stand up and speak their minds tonight. This is an issue of fairness and equality."

The Rev. Tony Ricciuti of Downtown United Presbyterian Church told the Council, "As a representative of one of the many religious traditions in our community, I especially ask you not to be deterred by claims that there is only one divinely sanctioned form of family. Domestic partnership is a new term, but it represents a reality as old as the Bible, which mentions 30 or 40 different types of families... A mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law, Ruth and Naomi, made a vow of commitment often repeated today as an exchange between bride and groom: 'Where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your ways shall be my ways and your people my people.' If Ruth and Naomi made that vow today, they could not claim any health benefits."

Ricciuti continued, "Neither our fear of homosexuality nor a 3000-year delay in coming to terms with reality should prevent you from passing legislation that is fair, just and long overdue."

Sandy DeRobertes, an actuary, said that he works in the city and he and his partner pay taxes, support schools, and

work with the poor and the handicapped. "It's really painful to stand here tonight and say I want your blessing on my relationship," he said. "I feel I don't have to hide my relationship... I have a right to the same things I pay for for every heterosexual couple... The only issue we are talking about is discrimination."

Ellen Schnurr said that not to pass the bill would send a message of discrimination. She said that her grandfather had experienced discrimination as an Irish Catholic, and her father had experienced discrimination because his father was a union worker.

Following the speakers, Council members expressed their own views. Tim Mains concentrated mostly on correcting misstatements about the financial aspects of the measure, saying that research in 20 other cities with partnership programs shows that only three to five percent of employees take advantage of benefits.

"Using the higher figure of five percent, that would mean a \$100,000 cost. The Finance and Law Committee is not leery of spending \$100,000. We consider carefully what we will expend and what we will not. \$100,000 won't cost the taxpayer a dime. I don't believe there will be cost to the city because we will find other programs. Equity and benefits should be a priority for employers."

Mains refuted the claim that homosexuality is a "chosen lifestyle," and said that the city's choice is whether to recognize all families, not just traditional families. He said that an unidentified media person had said to him recently that he, Mains, could have married but had chosen not to.

"For those of you who do not quite understand the nature of sexuality," Mains said, "that does not happen to be a choice. I believe strongly that this is not anti-family legislation," he ended. "It's just the opposite. This is pro-family legisla-

tion. Those households where people care for each other and are involved in the financial and emotional well-being of the household make contributions to this city."

Gary Muldoon said that he would not vote for the measure because he was concerned about cost, and because there had not been enough public discussion. "Short-circuiting is what we are doing," he said. "We need to think twice about this legislation." He called for public hearings on the measure.

Muldoon said he opposed granting equal benefits to unmarried heterosexual couples, who he said do not accept responsibility for their relationships the way married couples do.

Muldoon accepted endorsement by the Empire State Pride Agenda during his campaign last fall. Dick Dadey, executive director of ESPA, said, "We are very disappointed by Gary Muldoon's failure to support the domestic partnership legislation, particularly given the fact that the Pride Agenda endorsed his campaign. Although he didn't specifically say so in his questionnaire, he indicated he had some reservations about supporting the whole concept of domestic partnership. There was reason to believe he was educable, and given his general support for equal treatment for lesbians and gays, he would understand the need which exists for our relationships to be recognized. By his action he stepped out of the march that's taking place across the state for equal treatment for gays and lesbians. He has a lot of explaining to do to show why he should be considered a friend of the community."

Michael Fernandez said, "This goes to the very core of who we are, how we were raised and fundamentally what we believe... Tonight's vote is about values, not money or technicalities." Fernandez spoke about two of his

friends, a gay couple who he said were family and always supportive of each other, and how relatives and friends came together as extended family after one partner died of AIDS. He quoted from Prior Walter's famous speech in Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*.

"We are not going away. We won't die secret deaths anymore. The world only spins forward. We will be citizens. The time has come."

Fernandez concluded, "Rochester will follow the example of Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony in doing what is right, not what is popular."

Benjamin Douglas, who also declined to vote for registration, but supported benefits, said that his central concern was not homosexuality but validation of unmarried heterosexual relationships. "I think if the issue of gay marriage was the central piece of this legislation, I think we would have a different discussion," he said.

City Council President Lois Geiss said, "I was very distressed by the intolerance demonstrated tonight by members of the community. Maybe I've glimpsed something of what you feel every day."

Geiss said that she had talked to a gay

"I was distressed to see the intolerance demonstrated tonight by members of the community. Maybe I have glimpsed something of what you feel every day."

Lois Geiss, president, Rochester City Council

Brian Curran said, "Those who have raised the issue of cost have in the past supported expenditures in less worthy causes," such as the proposed stadium and Brown's Race. He said, "If we think city employees' work is productive, we ought to give them the benefits they're entitled to."

Curran said that although the Council cannot right all wrongs, "We have the opportunity to take a step within our limited jurisdiction to right a wrong."

Wade Norwood said that he would vote for the benefits aspect of the bill, but not the couples registration. "Regardless of how we feel about the issue," he said, "most people who spoke for it spoke intelligently and compassionately, and want to move the community forward."

man during the past week who told her, "All I want is to be valued by the community where I work and live." She said that she would support the bill, which took some steps in that direction.

After the vote had been taken, Mayor Johnson commented, "I know several speakers on both sides of the issue. Either way I sign, I will disappoint some friends and supporters."

Nonetheless, he said, "As a father of three daughters (two of whom I hope will find husbands), a red-blooded lover of women (something I am proud of), and a Christian whose faith teaches religious tolerance, I can tell you that as soon as this legislation hits my desk, I will sign it into law."



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Love and memory: the Quilt comes to the U. of Rochester

By James S. C. Bloomfield
How do you describe an event like the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt in 1300 words or less? You could mention the splendid and wonderful job that the University of Rochester, the Host Committee and the hundreds of volunteers accomplished. You could give facts, such as attendance by more than 10,000 people and the thousands of dollars raised for local agencies who provide services to the HIV/AIDS community.

But that would not be enough. It would not capture the emotion, the grieving, the joy, the inexplicable manner in which mere pieces of cloth sewn together can wrap us in the memories of our hopes and dreams, the way the Quilt seems to touch upon the dignity and sacredness of our humanity. I'm afraid words would fail me, and so I offer you a few stories and reflections, instead.

Two women, senior citizens, enter the Field House at the U. of R. campus where the Quilt is being displayed. Upon seeing the five dozen or so Quilt volunteers who are dressed all in white, one exclaims, "Oh Margaret, how nice! Look at all the doctors and nurses here to take care of the AIDS patients!"

Margaret rebuts, "Don't be foolish, Emma. All the AIDS patients are

dead. Strong Hospital is right next door, and they probably came over on their lunch hour!"

In a way, being a volunteer is very similar to being a healer. Most medical personnel will inform you that their real job is helping a person's body to heal itself. To "work the Quilt" is to assume the role of healer. It is to give witness to the miracle of birth and death, to record the passage of lives and the gifts of love. Quilt volunteers administer hugs, tissues, kind words, soft smiles, and gallons of mutual tears. It is a gift given from a wounded heart, a gift that heals those it touches.

Oh, Margaret, all AIDS patients are not dead. Surrounding you that morning were HIV positive people who were more full of life than you could ever realize. Even those people whose panels you came to see, those who had gone beyond our grasp; they, too, were alive in that room. You could talk to them, hold them in your heart; and fingering the soft fabric of a panel in your hand you could even touch them once again. I spent three days doing so.

A baby cries. It is a huge, hungry howling cry. One woman turns to another and smiles. "What a wonderful sound to have in here!" she says. There is a thirst and an hunger for un-

derstanding. Our hearts are empty with our losses, our bellies full and poisoned on our fear. The gentle grace of the Quilt is full of memories of homes and families, kitchen chats, warm bedding and shared love on a cold night. It fills our emptiness with love, it purges our fear with mourning and comfort.

There is a panel that reads, "My hands are empty now, I cannot hold you; but my heart is filled with you, and I think of you often."

Gaetan Dugas, the infamous "Patient Zero," has a panel as well. A group is arguing whether Dugas is a horrible monster, a scapegoat who's been saddled with our own failings, or the first of many innocent people who are martyred by AIDS. They argue how to pronounce his name. "It doesn't matter how you pronounce it," a man says, "because right or wrong, the word will probably pronounce his name as Judas."

People are quick to cast blame before they enter the Quilt. They wonder such things as how our government could practice genocide by apathy, why the deceased weren't more careful, and when will we stop this disease. Lovers and family members weep over panels, and blame themselves. If only they had accepted him, if only they had told her one more time that they loved her, if only, if only...

A man stoops beside panel after panel and weeps, hugging himself in pain. He is from New York City. He used to work in an HIV/AIDS care center until he watched over 100 di-

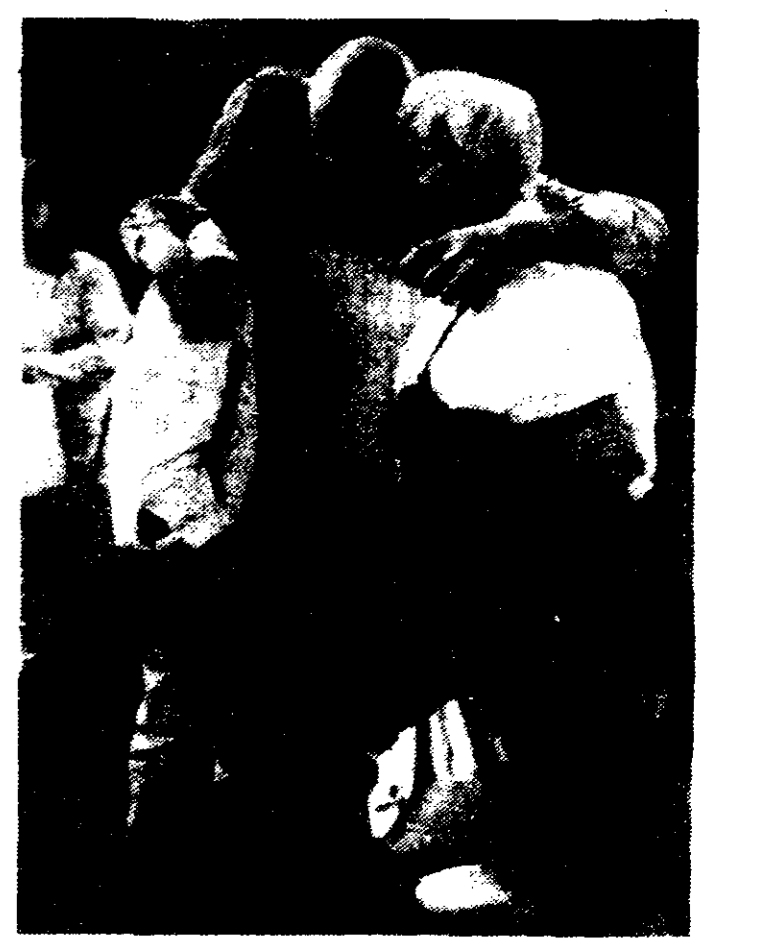
ents, staff and friends die during the course of one year. He points to a panel and tells me about his friend.

I realize that no one is to blame. Yes, we are all responsible for our actions, we all make choices on how we are going to live our lives. But AIDS is not a choice, not a punishment, not something to be blamed. It is a disease. As I watch the man move to another panel, a crush of sorrow crossing his face as he recognizes another name, I realize that AIDS must be cured in our hearts before we will ever cure it in our bodies.

Perhaps that is a foolish hope, but it is a hope that the Quilt offers to me. The slogan, is after all, "See the Quilt and Understand." Perhaps it is a matter of education, but sometimes I think it is more a matter of commitment, not only to the physical well-being of others, but also careful nurturing of their dignity.

I'm at the side of the Quilt when a young man appears before me. He is a U. of R. student wandering through the Sports Complex. His face is full of sincerity and innocence, and he has a basketball tucked under one arm. "Excuse me, sir," he says, "but could you tell me where I could find this AIDS Quilt?"

I look over his shoulder where 64 12' x 12' panels cover the floor of an indoor baseball field not more than 10 feet from where he is standing. Twenty feet above his head, another 32 panels are suspended from the ceiling. But he is serious, there is no guile within the boy. "Sure," I say, "would you like me to take you



Left: Signatures and notes. Above: a Quilt panel. Right: Brian Heaney of New York City and family mourn the loss of a loved one. Photos by Doug Messler

there?" He is amazed and grateful for my unexpected cooperation. I put my hand on each shoulder, and firmly turn him around. With a flourish of my hand I say, "Welcome to the Quilt."

"Oh, is this it? Thanks, I didn't know!"

We spend a lot of time talking "with" and "at" people, and yet, it seems that no one can ever quite see what we can see. Politicians and policy makers stand in the midst of an epidemic, and they close their eyes. Bigots look at who has AIDS, and never see the disease. Families look at our lovers and the families we

create, and some cannot see the covenant of love with which the womb of our creation has gifted us.

It is all too messy. There are too many bodies lying on the floor of the Field House. Who's going to clean this up? Who's to blame?

Perhaps we are all innocent. Perhaps we were all on our way to play a little basketball, or whatever other lifegame we play, when we stumbled onto AIDS. Perhaps we didn't know, guileless in our naiveté.

If so, then education begins with this.

We need to be firmly turned around. We need to open our eyes and see. We need to touch, mourn, love, forgive and be forgiven by our loved ones who are now beyond our arms' reach. We need to keep them alive in our lives and memories. We need to fill the hunger of our hearts with the love of the dignity of all our sisters and brothers. We need to cast out the doubt and blame of our past, and tend to our present and our future.

Despite all the pain, sorrow and horror of AIDS, we must be grateful for this precious gift, that it has made us much

stronger as a People. It has broken our hearts of stone, and given us hearts of flesh suitable to be filled with the love of each other.

My hands are empty, but my heart is filled with the memory of every panel and every person who paused before them. I shall think of them often, in gratitude and love, for that is the message of the Quilt.

This, I know and understand. I saw the Quilt.

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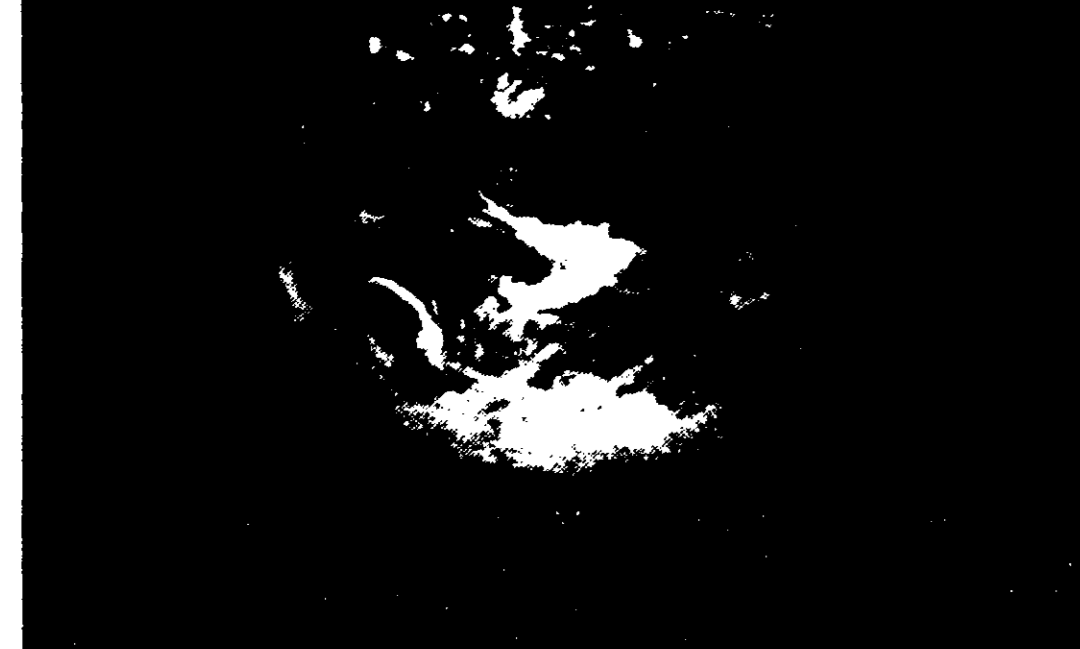
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Reaching out to lesbians about breast cancer testing

By Susan Jordan

The Women's Health Partnership is reaching out to lesbians, especially those who are not covered by health insurance, with a message of prevention and awareness about breast cancer and other women's health issues. Women can receive breast exams and mammograms at low cost or for free through the Partnership.

Bonnie Lewis and Susan Cowell spoke with the *Empty Closet* recently about the Partnership, a New York State program which began in January 1993 as the Women's Breast Health Partnership. It has now expanded, and will be working on other women's health issues in addition to those of breast cancer.

Funded by a combination of state money and a grant from the Rochester Primary Care Network, the Partnership is meant to fill in the gaps in health care for women who are not insured and cannot afford regular health care, or are not aware of the need for breast self-exams and mammograms.

The Women's Health Partnership offers clinical breast exams and mammograms at either no or low cost; the Partnership will pick up whatever an individual's insurance won't pay for. The American Cancer Society handles all Partnership referrals, setting up appointments and arranging transportation. The latter is provided even for women who have insurance, if there is a need.

Susan Cowell said, "I got involved with

the Partnership's Special Populations Committee to work on lesbian health issues. Recently, the Partnership did a study interviewing women who were seeking mammograms in Rochester. It documented what we already know: that African American, Latina and other minority women don't have access to good health care, and that lesbians aren't tied into seeking birth control and are afraid to come out to health care providers. So we get episodic, not preventive, health care."

Cowell, who is on the board of the Empire State Pride Agenda, said that the organization put together a '94 Public Policy Agenda with a list of recommended actions, which include asking the Department of Health about the Cancer Registry, in order to start including information on sexual identity.

"We also want to work with the New York State Health Department," Cowell said, "to produce a brochure for lesbians on breast cancer." She said that a bill is pending in the state legislature which would regulate the practice of mammograms, and that the Partnership supports that legislation.

Bonnie Lewis said that the Partnership came into existence because the State received money to screen underfunded women; there is a program in existence at St. Mary's Hospital. "The State found a need for this in rural counties," Lewis said. "It currently gives local

agencies funds, but doesn't follow up with special interventions. That's left up to local Partnerships."

The Primary Care Network grant means more research in evaluation in radiologists' offices to determine why women access services. Lewis said, "Their motivations can be their physicians' recommendations, ads they saw in papers like the *Empty Closet* or on TV, etc. Ninety-seven percent of the women surveyed in the first round-up said they got mammograms because their doctors recommended it. We need to work with doctors to identify uninsured women and refer them to us for service."

Lewis said that the Partnership can teach women how to perform self-exams, do a clinical breast exam on them, and do mammograms. If a clinical or mammogram is suspicious, the Partnership follows up and pays for further diagnostics; it can arrange biopsies and other treatment, and make sure the women are connected with a surgeon or can get Medicaid. "Part of the state mandate for Partnerships is to follow up," she said. "We're there through the entire process."

Once women are part of the system, they get yearly reminders for their annual or bi-annual screening, depending on age. "The self exam and doctor exam are recommended for all women," Lewis said. "Women between 40 and 49 need a screening mammogram every two years, and after age 50, yearly. This is the standard of the American Cancer Society and is based solely on the density of tissue in younger women, which makes mammograms an ineffective diagnostic tool for women under 40."

"I really think the most important thing for us is to identify the pockets of women in Monroe County who don't have insurance and don't see a doctor," Lewis said. "We're reaching out to them as much as possible, but women need to be pro-active too."

Sue Cowell said that nine out of 10 lumps are found by women themselves during self-exams. "I'm also a nurse practitioner and work per diem at a health center," she said. "I tell women that you get a clinical exam once a year, so you need to do regular self-exams."

Bonnie Lewis said, "It isn't always OK, if you find something, to assume it's nothing. Take it as far as you can so you have a level of comfortability." She said that one out of nine women will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some time in their lives.

On the question of outreach to women who do not receive adequate medical care, Lewis said, "We take this two-pronged; we will be extensively on the radio and will hand out flowers and information at the Public Market. We have counter displays in Wegmans' florist departments and inner city beauty salons that target Latina and African American women."

Lewis said that she does presentations for groups, during which she gives sessions on exams and self-education. For groups of 15 or less, she does an interactive workshop with models, and explains self-exams. For larger groups, she can speak but cannot do the interactive workshops. Anyone who is interested in setting up a workshop or talk can reach her at 473-2652.

"One out of nine women will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some point in their lives... Most people get no health care or lousy health care. Women don't get a chance to talk with other women about fear and denial... I want women to say, 'I want and deserve this.' Do it for your loved ones, but most important, do it for yourself."

**-Bonnie Lewis,
Women's Health
Partnership**

When asked why many women do not get regular exams or mammograms, Lewis said, "It's the fear of dealing with it, but also physician recommendations. Older women especially don't do things unless their doctors recommend it. Then there's the fear of what's involved in the test itself, which can seem threatening."

Sue Cowell pointed out that being in a group, as at one of the workshops, can help women deal with fear of mammograms. "As with HIV testing," she said, "do you want to know now or do you want to find out later? If I know sooner, I can take control of my life and

it gives me more power over my life and any changes I need to make."

Bonnie Lewis added, "Most people get no health care or lousy health care. Women don't get the chance to talk with other women about fear and denial."

Cowell said that she had done an informal survey of lesbians' attitudes toward breast exams and mammograms, and had found the usual fear and avoidance. "I'm not sure what to do..." "I don't want to think about it..."

She said, "We focus on insurance and cost, which are significant factors, but even bigger is fear and avoidance."

Another problem is the frequent lack of physician recommendations, due to the facts that health care is often compartmentalized, and many busy doctors provide episodic rather than preventive care. Less than 20 percent are equipped to track patients and remind them when they are due for testing.

Finally, too many women do not take care of themselves adequately. Bonnie Lewis said, "I want women to say, 'I want and deserve this.' Do it for your loved ones, but most important, do it for yourself."



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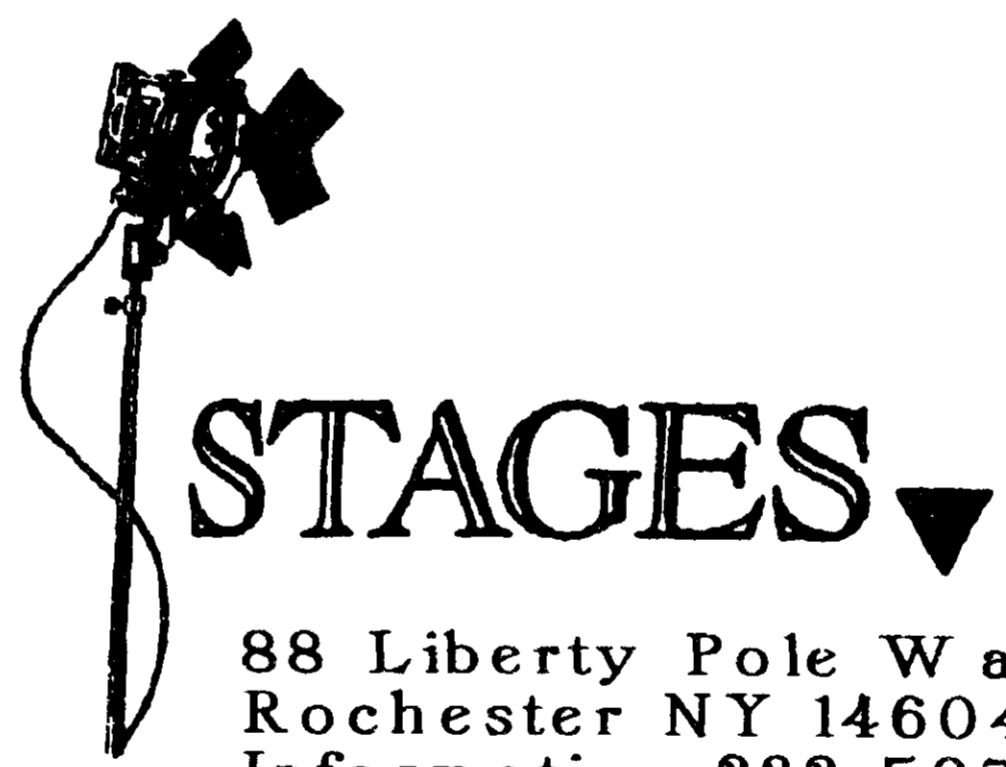
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OPINION

Remembering gay and lesbian victims of the Holocaust; could it happen here?

By Charles Collins

Fifty years after the fall of the Third Reich, there is renewed interest in the Nazi swastika and the evil it represents.

There are several possible reasons. Perhaps it's because the aging survivors of the Holocaust want future generations to "never forget." Perhaps they are reacting to revisionists who say the Holocaust never happened. Perhaps the "ethnic cleansing" in the former Yugoslavia smacks too much of the Nazi "final solution." Or perhaps it's because of new signs of anti-Semitism and intolerance of human difference visible throughout the world. All are legitimate reasons for concern.

This renewed interest in the Holocaust is not limited to Jews. We gay people are remembering our sisters and brothers (both Jewish and non-Jewish) who died at the hands of the Nazis. Although the records documenting their capture and extermination are incomplete, enough information has been pieced together to give us an understanding for this bleak time in our history.

The world has changed considerably during the past half century, and America is more stable than Germany's Weimar Republic following World War I. We might feel safe in the belief that America would never tolerate an Adolf Hitler.

But just as the Germans who suffered Nazi persecution undoubtedly trusted the basic goodness of their fellow Germans, we may also be naive in trusting America to do the right thing. If we believe we could never be persecuted like gay people in Nazi Germany, we risk being like German Jews who believed there could never be another Inquisition.

Every era and every society has its own forms of oppression. African Americans experience a different form of oppression today than their ancestors did in the pre-Civil War South. The question is not whether Pat Robertson or Oliver North could become another Adolf Hitler. The question is whether the social conditions which fostered the Nazi persecution of gay men and lesbians exist in America today. It could be argued that the following conditions meet that criterion.

1. People believe society is "on the wrong track," and they look for a scapegoat to blame for social problems. The German people looked internally to explain their defeat following World War I and their backbreaking postwar economy. Americans today seem increasingly obsessed with the breakdown of the family and general decay of social values. We are inclined to scapegoat rather than address the more fundamental causes of our nation's problems.

2. The youth of society lack direction and confidence in the future, particularly young men. Hitler could not have succeeded were it not for his skill at indoctrinating German youth. Right wing youth movements and indoctrination programs

in America today foster lies and hatred against gay people.

3. The majority of the population is unable to discern and confront injustice. Germany prior to 1930 lacked the sense of justice necessary for the Weimar democracy to succeed. Our democracy was founded upon principles safeguarding the rights of minorities, but some Americans show signs of impatience with those principles. Of greater concern are those Americans who are aware of injustice but are unable to speak out against it. Certainly such silence was epidemic in Hitler's Germany.

4. There is a popular ideology based on exclusion. While Nazi Germany excluded the Jews, Communists, gypsies, gays, feminists and others, gay people are among the groups excluded from full participation in today's American society.

5. The financial and political successes of minorities are cast in a negative light. Wealthy Jews were labeled the cause of Germany's economic woes. Gay advocates had nearly succeeded in legalizing sex between men when the Nazi Party began winning seats in the German Reichstag, making legalization impossible. In America, persuasive bigots depict gay people as wealthy hedonists who are jeopardizing the welfare of society with an aggressive agenda for "special rights."

Despite victories such as the recent domestic partnership legislation in Rochester, the conditions permitting anti-gay persecution are increasingly evident across America. We can ignore them,

thinking things will never be as bad for us as they were for gay Germans in 1935; or we can take some important steps to address these conditions.

We can take an active interest in the youth of America. Even those of us who do not have children cannot afford to be disinterested in the quality of our public schools. It is vitally important that gay and lesbian youth are not intimidated by their teachers and peers, and that gay and lesbian issues are truthfully addressed in school curricula.

We can learn to watch for signs of injustice, regardless of the victims or rationale. We must be aware of injustice being done by our government in the name of the national interest. We must monitor the unjust policies proposed by the religious right concerning welfare families, women with unwanted pregnancies, non-Christians, and gay men and lesbians. We must speak out against those policies and encourage our friends to do the same.

We can build alliances with others who are oppressed by bigotry. We must work to overcome our own racism, anti-Semitism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, and classism. We must not be fooled into thinking that as victims of discrimination, we are incapable of discriminating against others.

We must learn from the past. We must learn the lessons of the Holocaust. We must never forget.



Greta Cammermeyer speaks on military ban at U.R. Pride Week

By Melissa Gallison

Ex-Col. Margarethe (Greta) Cammermeyer spoke at the University of Rochester on April 15. The event was coordinated and sponsored by the Student Nurses Association.

Dr. Cammermeyer spoke about her experiences as a lesbian who was "separated" from the service, when, while being questioned for a top secret security clearance in her quest to be Chief of the Army Nurse Corps, she told the truth in response to interrogation about her sexual orientation.

Dr. Cammermeyer was invited to speak after the undergraduate nursing students reviewed related issues in a class project. Greta's distinguished career of 31 years in the military included many commendations, including a Bronze Star for service in Vietnam, VA Nurse of the Year in 1985, and the Honorary Human Rights Award in 1994 from the American Nurses Association.

Her experiences growing up in Norway during the Nazi occupation, joining the military after nursing school, Vietnam during the Tet offensive, and the social context of the military and the climate of hate crimes in peace time shaped her responsiveness to the military's planned discharge.

At that point Greta stated that she knew



she had to challenge the policy. Her case will be reviewed at the district level this month, where she is seeking to have the decision declared unconstitutional. She is the highest ranking officer to challenge this military policy. Her advocates and attorneys include the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Northwest Women's Law Center, and the Military Law Task Force of the National Lawyers Guild.

Dr. Cammermeyer, a nurse scientist and clinical nurse specialist in neurology, spoke with great conviction about her many roles as a mother, grandmother, taxpayer, and soldier, while mocking the language about homosexuality as a *lifestyle*, which trivializes the many identities that we have. In her closing remarks, Dr. Cammermeyer said that gays and lesbians have gained many things from the struggles of the past few years, in-

cluding the fact that since the dialogue is occurring, we now have the opportunity to define ourselves instead of being defined by others. She noted the importance of collectivizing the struggles of all who have been oppressed as a human rights issue.

She emphasized the importance of integrating the perspective of the collective struggles of gays and lesbians, the changing roles of men and women, all people who have been subjected to hate crimes, and the struggles against segregation, in order to recognize discrimination in any form and not tolerate it.

Watch for upcoming media about Dr. Cammermeyer's inspiring life story, including an NBC made-for-TV movie being produced by Barbra Streisand that will star Glenn Close, and a book, *Serving in Silence*, that will be released in October by Viking Press.

Above left: Greta Cammermeyer with Holly Anderson, president of Student Nurses Association (left) and Timory Howe, vice-president, senior class, Student Nurses Association. Above right: Cammermeyer speaks in Hoyt Auditorium at U.R. Photos by Melissa Gallison

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Freedom Singers to appear in concert and on TV in May and June

By Jodi Cohen

The Rochester Freedom Singers are bursting into spring! We have all been flourishing and experiencing a most positive rejuvenation as we gear up for our upcoming performances on May 21 at the Lilac Festival and June 4 at Downtown United Presbyterian Church.

Emotions run high as deadlines need to be met. We are so excited, yet sometimes very exhausted. Our spring fever has us picking out logos, printing t-shirts, getting advertisers and looking for sponsors.

Through the process of consensus we have finalized our vision statement as follows: "The Rochester Freedom Singers aspire to a leadership role in promoting equality, freedom and love in our hearts, our towns and in our lives. We sing with the hope that our music will contribute to the greater understanding and acceptance of the diversity that is the beauty of the world community. Our music spans the ages of humankind, languages, religions and affectional preferences. We value inclusiveness that encourages people to live their lives wholly, completely, openly and honestly. We are deliberately totally integrated, and witness that open hearts make beautiful music."

The success of our most recent joint venture with the Brighton Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Faure's Requiem on March 6 has furthered our horizons beyond my wildest dreams. During the previous week I had the privilege of speaking with Keith Moyer, editor and

vice president/news for the *Democrat and Chronicle*. He put me in touch with Richard Prince, editor of the Speaking Out column, who worked with me throughout the week to get an article ready for publication. From the bottom of my heart I also thank Kelley Kralick-Jones, Joan Giuffre and Susan David for working with me night and day to make it possible.

The article, "Haters Might Just See Their Own Reflection," was published on the Sunday morning of our performance. It discussed the controversial speech of the Nation of Islam's Khalid Abdul Mohammed who made comments that sent flowing a wave of outrage and fury. When he condemns the J-ews, might he be looking in the mirror?

Vladimir Janlevitch proposed an explanation as to why certain populations feel so strongly about one another. "To the person whose resemblance to you is close, yet who is not really your double, you might easily end up saying, 'You are almost like me.' The similarity between us is so plain that in the eyes of the world you are my brother. But, to speak honestly, you are not my brother." The Rochester Freedom Singers is an organization built on love.

Charlotte Clark, the Public Affairs Director at WOKR Channel 13, read the article and contacted me the following day. She invited the Freedom Singers to participate in her new show called "Many Voices, Many Visions," which airs Sunday mornings at 9. The show is based on the premise that although we come in many different shapes, sizes, colors, cultures and creeds, underlying our differences are similarities. And our community can be strong and peaceful only when it acknowledges its diversity and its unity.



Photo by Matthias Boetrich

On Mother's Day, May 8, the Rochester Freedom Singers will be featured singing the show's theme song, our own arrangement of the original music written by Charlotte Clark. The talk show format will feature chorus members Bill Coleman and Amy Peasley.

Bill, a gay father, will share his joys, love and commitment in that relationship. His 13-year old son, Scott, is also a singing member of the Freedom Singers. Unfortunately, Scott will soon be moving. That is, from the soprano section to the tenor section right next to his dad. Bill will be singing a solo rendition of "The Greatest Love of All". Amy Peasley, a lesbian mother, will discuss her love for her daughter, Rachael, while in the midst of a three-year custody battle.

The second show will air June 12 and feature Freedom Singers Michael Lee, Dr. Ted Ashizawa and Jodi Cohen — an Afri-

can American, a Japanese American and a Jewish American.

We will also be singing at the Lilac Festival on May 21 at noon on the center stage, and we will be performing at Downtown United Presbyterian Church on June 4 at 8 p.m. Our love theme concert, called "Sounds Like Love," will feature some exciting new twists and growths within the Rochester Freedom Singers. An original piece of music written by Tommy Warfield will be performed.

The views and opinions from the gay and lesbian community are at the forefront of the news. The good news. The positive forces that bring our community together! We will all be so excited to see you at our upcoming events.

A special thanks to Bud Minard. For further information please call me, Jodi Cohen, at 544-9969.

MAKING THE SCENE

Boots of leather, slippers of gold

Madeline Davis and Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy, authors of *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold*, which tells the stories of Buffalo's lesbian community of the '40s and '50s, gave a reading at Borders Bookstore on April 16.

About a dozen women listened to the authors describe their attempt to clarify what butch/femme culture was, and to tell how pre-Stonewall lesbians developed a sense of pride. To women today who may feel prejudiced against rigid role-playing, Kennedy said that their book is meant to be an ethnography of the early butch/femme community, and to help us understand what it was like to live in that culture.

Bar life, butch/femme roles, and relationships of all kinds were discussed, as well as the interesting fact that white and African American women were in closer contact in those days than has been the case in later years. The lesbian community of the '50s was the second one, after the jazz community, to de-segregate, as lesbian consciousness overrode the divisions of racism.

In the oppressed "pre-political" era, the authors said, there was no accepted way of coming out openly, so women communicated by visual appearance. Although there is no longer a need for such codes, Kennedy and Davis urged us to look beyond the surface of clothing and attitude to see the persona underneath.

Kennedy and Davis are donating 70 percent of their royalties to EAGLE, a Buffalo group for older lesbians and gay men. They stressed the obligation they feel to give back to the community that has nurtured them.



Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy and Madeline Davis at Borders Bookstore on April 16. Photo by Ellen Mahaffy.



Above: line dancing at Club Marcella



ERRATA: In the March issue of the Empty Closet, GAGV auction volunteer Marsay (left) was not identified. In the April issue, Jodi Cohen was incorrectly identified as Jodi White.

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MAY

SUNDAY 1
Female Misbehavior. Film by German director Monika Treut. Outrage Festival, Hallwalls Art Center, 2496 Main St., Buffalo. 5 and 7:30 pm, \$6, (716) 835-7362.

THURSDAY 5
Derek Jamnan's Wittgenstein. Outrage Festival, Hallwalls, 2496 Main St., Buffalo. Also May 6, 7:30 and 9:30 pm, \$6. (716) 835-7362.
COAP. Potluck dinner, 6:30 pm. Call Christopher, 442-3491.

FRIDAY 6
GAGV movie night. "Prick Up Your Ears," 7 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-8640.

SATURDAY 7
Forbidden Love. Classic on lesbian life in '50s, presented by co-director Lynne Fernie. Outrage Festival, Hallwalls, 2496 Main St., Buffalo. At 4, 7:45 and 10 p.m. \$7.50. (716) 835-7362.

Monroe Community College Diversity Day. 10 am - 6 pm, MCC Theater and surrounding area. Free. "Ladies on the Couch," 4 pm. 359-8761.

SUNDAY 8
Rochester Freedom Singers appear on "Many Voices, Many Visions," WOKR Channel 13, 9 a.m.

MONDAY 9
Domestic partnership victory celebration. GAGV Community Center, 7 pm. Refreshments.

TUESDAY 10
COAP board meeting. 7 pm. Call Russ, 473-6407.

WEDNESDAY 11
Gospel concert with David and Jane, 7:30 pm, Open Arms MCC, 875 E. Main St. 271-8478.
Alternative Imaginations poetry group, 7 pm, GAGV Community Center. 244-7159.

THURSDAY 12
Daddy and the Muscle Academy. Profile of Tom of Finland. Outrage Festival, Hallwalls, 2496 Main St., Buffalo. Also May 13, 7:30 and 9:30 pm, \$6. (716) 835-7362.

FRIDAY 13
GAGV movie night. "Hocus Pocus," 7 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-8640.

COAP Horror movies. 8 pm. Call James, 473-6407.
SATURDAY 14

Raymond Luczak, deaf gay writer, 7 pm, Writers and Books, 740 University Ave. Performing and reading from his book, "Eyes of Desire." Also book-signing, \$3. Voice interpreted. Hosted by Sign Words Project Deaf Poetry Series.

Rochester Gay Men's Chorus Gayage Sale. 9 am - 4 pm, 299 Caroline St. 423-0650.

Lioness Pride Motorcycle Club. Meeting, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. For time call 768-6054.

Filmmakers' Series. Gregg Bordowitz will screen "Fast Trip, Long Drop" at 8 pm at the Visual Studies Workshop Media Center, 31 Prince St.

SUNDAY 15
Relationship Sunday. Recognition of coupled relationships. Everyone wel-

come. Open Arms MCC, 875 E. Main St. 271-8478.

MONDAY 16
Empty Closet deadline. Articles, classified ads, letters to editor, non-camera-ready ads. 244-9030.

The Word Is Out. Meeting for cable access TV show, 7 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

TUESDAY 17
COAP volleyball at Durand Eastman Park, 6 pm.

THURSDAY 19
In Remembrance of the Pink and Black Triangles. Interfaith service for gay and lesbian victims of Nazi bigotry. 7:30 pm, free, open to public, First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd. Participants include Rochester Gay Men's Chorus.

FRIDAY 20
Empty Closet deadline. Photographs, camera-ready ads. 244-9030.

HIV and the Primary Care Provider. Fourth annual day of workshops sponsored by U. of Rochester, Strong AIDS Center. Keynote speaker, Kristine M. Gebbie, National AIDS Policy Co-ordinator, 9 am. Registration deadline May 6, cost \$65 by deadline, \$80 after May 6. Holiday Inn - Airport, 911 Brooks Ave. 275-4392.

GAGV movie night. "Partners," 7 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-8640.

SATURDAY 21
Rochester Freedom Singers at Lilac Festival center stage, noon.

Out and About canal path bike tour, 11 am. 244-7159.
COAP mini-golf. Putt Putt, Henrietta. Call Chuckles, 334-2795.

SUNDAY 22
Cris Williamson and Tret Fure. Concert to benefit U.R. Pediatric HIV Unit, 7 pm, Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. Featuring Rochester Women's Community Chorus. \$20 general admission; \$50 reserved seating and post-concert reception with artists. Tickets available at Silkwood Books, Rochester Custom Leather, Village Green, or by calling (716) 235-9336.

MONDAY 23
Redefining Lesbian Intimacy from a Radical Feminist Perspective. 7 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. For women only.

TUESDAY 24
Queer Classics by Rosa von Praunheim. Five early films never shown in U.S. by acclaimed German director. May 24-28. May 24, 8 pm: "It's Not the Homosexual Who Is Perverse, But the Situation in Which He Lives." Outrage Festival, Hallwalls, 2495 Main St., Buffalo. (716) 835-7362. \$6.

WEDNESDAY 25
Army of Lovers by Rosa von Praunheim. 8 pm, Outrage Festival, Hallwalls, 2495 Main St., Buffalo. \$6.

THURSDAY 26
Survival in New York by Rosa von Praunheim. 7:30 and 9:30 pm, Outrage Festival, Hall-

walk, 2495 Main St., Buffalo. \$6.

FRIDAY 27
GAGV movie night. "The Charles Pierce Show," 7 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-8640.

Underground & Emigrants by Rosa von Praunheim. 7:30 and 9:30 pm, Outrage Festival, Hallwalls, 2495 Main St., Buffalo. \$6.

COAP. Java Joe's, 8:30 pm. Call James, 473-6407.

SATURDAY 28
Out and About rare lily trip to Bergen Swamp. For information call 473-9384.

City of Lost Souls by Rosa von Praunheim, who will appear in person at screenings, 7:30 and 9:30 pm, Hallwalls, 2495 Main St., Buffalo. \$6.

Infant Circumcision Forum. Discussion of medical and human rights aspects of infant circumcision. 2 pm, Shaw Room of Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. Sponsored by National Organization to Halt the Abuse and Routine Mutilation of Males (NOHARM).

SUNDAY 29
COAP picnic-hike. Mendon Ponds, 1 pm. Call Chuckles, 334-2795.

TUESDAY 31
Empty Closet mailing for June issue. 7 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. (upstairs.) People with cars who can help with distribution especially welcome! 244-9030.

COAP general meeting. 7 pm, GAGV Community Center.

ONGOING

SUNDAY
More Light Support Group for gay and lesbian people and friends, 12:15 pm, last Sundays. Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 271-1608.

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-Inequality 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.) 10:30 am, 6 pm. 271-8478.

Rochester Bisexual Women's Network Meeting and potluck supper. 6:30 pm, second Sunday. For location, info, call 436-7409.

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 (GLBA) U. of Rochester. Sundays, 6:30 pm, Morey 402.

Rochester Rangers monthly business meeting, first Sundays, 4 pm, Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave. 251-2122.

Youth Group Ages 14-21. First and third Saturdays, 2-5 pm, Gay Alliance Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. 251-9604.

MONDAY
Gay Women's Alcoholics Anonymous St. Luke's/St. Simon's Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. 8 pm, 232-6720.

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 Ruda at Jewish Family Services, 461-0110.

Gay and Lesbian Support Group Third Presbyterian Church, 4 Meigs St. First and third Mondays, 7:30-9 pm, 271-6513.

Women's basketball Monday nights, 7-9 pm, Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 7-8 half court, 8-9 full court. Ramona, 244-1640.

BI-GALA RIT student group. Mondays, 7:30-9:30 pm, RIT Center for Imaging Science, 76-1155. 475-4114.

Corpus Christi Gay/Lesbian Ministry Fourth Mondays, 7:30 pm, Corpus Christi rectory, 80 Prince St. 325-2424.

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. Write SCA, PO Box 18458, Rochester NY 14618.

Gay Alcoholics Anonymous 8 pm, Genesee Hospital, 244 Alexander St.

FinS* Professional social group. 5:30-7:30 pm, cash bar, Gallery Cafe, Memorial Art Gallery, 500 University Ave.

Finger Lakes Gay/Lesbian Support Group Third Tuesdays, first Fridays. Write: PO Box 941, Geneva NY 14456, or call (315) 536-7753, ask for Sam Edwards.

Lutherans Concerned Second Tuesdays, 7:30 pm, Lutheran Church of Concord, 485 Holmes Rd., Greece. 787-1577.

WEDNESDAY
Rochester Women's Community Chorus Rehearsals, 90 Hickory St. between South and Mt. Hope Aves. 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.

Positively Sober AA group, closed meetings. AIDS Rochester, 1350 University Ave. Every Wednesday, noon to 1 pm.

Bisexual Gay Lesbian Union Monroe Community College. Every Wednesday at noon, Room 6-313, 292-2000.

Feminist Discussion Group 7-9 pm, Slice of Life Cafe, 742 South Ave. Third Wednesdays. Film Festival '94.

7 pm, every third Wednesday, Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-8640.

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.

Gay and Lesbian Educators of Genesee Valley (GALE) Fourth Thursdays, 7:30 pm. For location call 244-8640, leave message.

ACT-UP/Rochester First and third Thursdays, 7:30 pm, Grace Presbyterian Church, 221 Malby, off Lyell near Mt. Read. 377-6936.

Rochester Freedom Singers Mixed chorus. Rehearsals 7 pm, Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. Mercy Spiritual Companion Program.

Evening of reflection for those impacted with AIDS. 7-9 pm. Third Thursdays. Call 671-6070 or 473-6893.

FRIDAY
Finger Lakes Gay-Lesbian Social Group First Fridays and third Tuesdays. Call (315) 536-5573 and ask for Sam Edwards, or write PO Box 941, Geneva NY 14456.

GAGV coffeehouse 6:30-9:30 pm, Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-8640.

Crossdressers Network Support/social group for crossdressers, transgendered people. Second Fridays, fourth Saturdays. 251-2132.

SATURDAY
Gay/Lesbian Al-Anon First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd. 7 pm.

Rochester Karas bar night Third Saturday, 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. Third Saturday. 2-6 pm, 244-9564.

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous Noon. Write SCA, PO Box 18458, Rochester NY 14618.

Lilac Rainbow Alliance for the Deaf Second Saturdays, 7 pm, Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave. Write PO Box 20093, Rochester NY 14618.

Rochester Frontrunners 9 am, walks/runs Genesee Valley Park. 244-8640.

For Women Only Coffeehouse Last Saturdays, 9 pm, Slice of Life Cafe, 742 South Ave. 461-9058.

GAGV Coffeehouse 6:30-9:30 pm, Gay Alliance, 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-8640.

Crossdressers Network Support/social group for crossdressers, transgendered people. Second Fridays, fourth Saturdays. 251-2132.

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May 9, 1994 7:00 pm

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Refreshments!

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ATTENTION: ORGANIZATIONS AND BUSINESSES IF YOU'D LIKE SPACE AT THE **GAGV PICNIC ON JULY 17** PLEASE CALL 244-8640 LEAVE A NAME AND PHONE NUMBER AND YOU WILL BE CONTACTED THANKS, THE PICNIC COMMITTEE

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Visiting Filmmaker
Gregg Bordowitz
Fast Trip, Long Drop
Admission: \$3.00 (Students \$2.00) VSW Students Free
May 14, 1994
8:00pm
SCREENING

This visiting artist is made possible with support from Film/Video Arts, which is funded by the New York State Council on the Arts. Co-sponsored by Gay Alliance of Genesee Valley & Visual Studies Workshop

Redefining Lesbian Intimacy from a Radical Feminist Perspective
(only open to women)
Monday, May 23 at 7 PM at the GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Avenue.
The second in a series of Community Center Forums sponsored by the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley.

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COLUMNISTS

GROWING UP

By
ERIC BELLMANN

The Olive Man

The phone rang, 10:15. "Your friend is here," the desk clerk said. "I'll be down in a few minutes." I must have dozed off. It's Nedal come to give me a farewell gift.

I'd spent the afternoon with Nedal and his chums drinking tea in a cafe across from the Citadel, all of them eager to practice their English and ask questions about America. Nice boys. Without thinking — really only to make conversation — I'd admired Nedal's wristwatch, and that was a mistake because he took it off and handed it to me. Arabs can be like that.

On my previous visit 15 months earlier I exclaimed in delight over a beaded ornament hanging from our bus's sun visor, and the driver simply handed it to me. Nedal had asked about my plans for my last day; he knew I was leaving the next afternoon.

I returned to Syria as close to suddenly as possible. I'd had a *very* bad day at work, and out of frustration had phoned my travel agent about flights. The next day I applied for a visa. Then I wrote Waleed in Damascus asking him to find me a hotel room.

Fifteen months earlier I'd spent a week in Syria, a sidebar to a trip to Turkey. Turkey is my obsession. I had no interest in Syria. There was no alternative — Syria was included — and so I went, grumbling. The Syrian leg of the tour was

poorly managed, too much time crisscrossing the country, posh hotels removed enough from the centers so that I felt effectively kept away from street life, and hardly more than one day in any single place.

On the upside, Roberta the tour owner and I had made friends with Waleed, our guide's assistant. Waleed actually was a guide himself, although on this trip he was reduced to running interference with hotel clerks, cab drivers and waiters. Waleed was clearly proud of his country and, it proved, annoyed that our introduction was so chaotic. I muttered one day (out of general earshot) that I was sick of *being shown* things; I liked to *discover* things. Waleed suggested we go for an evening walk and smoke cigarettes. He wanted to tell me about *his* country.

We corresponded during the following year. In each letter Waleed invited me to return, assuring me I'd have a good time. In each reply I would half-promise. Way of tours now, I passed up the organized opportunities that came along. Waleed wrote of his disappointment.

Then I got pissed at work. The air fare was discounted (bless the travel agent who is also a friend.) The embassy of the Arabic Republic of Syria came through with a visa in less than a week. Then I panicked. What will I do for three weeks? I phoned Roberta. "Well, you can visit The Olive Man."

Fifteen months earlier in Aleppo I had eased away from our group, leaving them wandering contentedly near the Omayyad Mosque, and headed towards dusty side streets with Waleed and Roberta in tow. Like a suddenly unleashed dog, I raced down mysterious alleys, past exotically

decorated fruit juice bars, barber shops, tiny stalls selling gold bangles. After rounding endless corners (everything Arabic is labyrinthine) we found ourselves on an ugly, wide street.

We stood in front of an odd row of shops, all the same size, rather like concrete garages with sliding metal doors. In each there was a display of green olives piled high in black containers made from rubber tires. Stacks of olive oil cans lined the walls. In the second shop were two men. We stopped to catch our breath, still giddy over our sudden escape, uncertain of our next move. And in that brief moment one of the two men shot up, moved rapidly to me and put his fingers to my ear. (I wear an ear ring.) With this as the sole reason Waleed, Roberta, and I were invited to have tea with The Olive Man.

We were warmly welcomed. The man who touched my ear receded to the back of the premises and prepared coffee over a small tripod burner. The owner, the man who came to exist in my mind as "The Olive Man," took charge, gave Roberta his chair and turned over a box for me. Our feet rested on the oil slicked concrete floor. Waleed stood at a slight distance.

I suspect he disapproved. The word Waleed uses most to describe himself is "faithful" — Arabs regard themselves as honor-bound to be helpful — and his duty here clearly was to facilitate our adventure. He had his work cut out: everything said twice, first in Arabic, then in English. The virtues of these olives, this particular oil, was explained. Roberta was promised the gift of a small bottle if we could possibly return tomorrow. Even better, could we come to dinner? Arabs

are instinctually hospitable/generous.

While translations ate time, I used the intervals to study The Olive Man. This was, after all, what I had escaped to find: authentic life. I nursed my coffee. There was something about him I liked. To comment that he was handsome begs the point; by now I had realized most Syrian Arabs are handsome. He had dignity and the kind of charm indicated by curiosity. We could not come to dinner — Roberta was edgy about the length of time we had been away from the group. And as it happened, we never did stop the next day to get the gift bottle of oil — again the tour's eternal refrain: no time, no time. While I sat, happy, I took four photographs.

"You can visit The Olive Man." Ever the prudent coach, Roberta added, "Why don't you have copies made of your snapshots and take them to him?"

Four mornings in a row I walked the short distance from my hotel to the spot Waleed had marked on Aleppo's city map. The shop was shuttered. All the shops were shuttered. It was Eid, the four day festival that follows Ramadan. Everyone was on holiday. The sidewalks choked with kids going to Jean Claude Van Damme movies, the streets filled with vendors: lemonade sellers, cassettes, posters. The souk was deserted, only the vegetable and meat markets were open. There was plenty to divert me. Each day I thought, well, I ought to try to find The Olive Man today.

Thinking the fifth day would mark the end of Eid, I handed the hotel clerk a note I'd printed. It asked if he remembered me and said that I had brought him some photographs as a present and that I

would like to visit a while and that I did not speak English. I left a space for him to write the message in Arabic. When I returned from breakfast the clerk handed me a piece of hotel stationery with the message elegantly written in Arabic and stapled to my note.

The shop was shuttered. (Later I learned many people extend the holiday to include the weekend.) But the shop next door was open. A cluster of dark-eyed Bedouins sat drinking coffee in a small office. I stood several moments conscious that I am, oddly, quite often, a hesitant adventurer and then entered, hoping, I suppose, for assistance. A significant aspect of travel really involves placing oneself in new situations and then waiting to see what occurs.

The packet was snatched from my hands, passed around and discussed, loudly, in Arabic. Luckily a passerby overheard the commotion and offered to translate. "This man doesn't come here any more. He sold his business. But these men know him. He lives 30 miles north of the city. They will see he gets the pictures. You can trust these people."

And so I left to spend the day with Nedal and his friends. I would not see The Olive Man. I felt relieved in a way — the morning treks had assumed the character of a quest and I was uneasy, embarrassed by my persistence. It is quite alarming to set a goal that may seem, to all the world, impulsive, even foolish, yet somehow remains important, private, secret, and then to have it evaporate.

I descended the four floors, opened the elevator's door and stepped into the lobby. It was not Nedal. It was The Olive Man. My heart exploded through

my brain. I stood in the lobby facing a man I had photographed four times during an hour visit 15 months earlier. I was speechless. I smiled. No, I beamed. I radiated.

It is a marvel of travel in the Middle East that there is always someone to help; the clerk, amused and perplexed, eagerly translated. His shift ended and the three of us sat for two hours, smoking cigarettes.

The Olive Man is Ahmet. Arabs pronounce "ah" in the back of the throat and it comes out "ahk," sharp and separate from the second syllable. For a long time, 15 months, I didn't know his name. He was only The Olive Man.

We traded details of our lives. Ahmet is the eldest of 11 children. He has nine children. He lives in a modern village; his parents, both alive, live nearby. He is dismayed that my mother and sister live in distant corners of America. I ask if he has ever met a foreigner before. "The first?" Abdul translates. I gave Ahmet my business card; he asked Abdul, the clerk, to write down his name and address. Ahmet is illiterate. Someone read him my note. The hotel stationery was his only clue.

Ahmet wants to show me archeological ruins near his village. He assures me I can take as many photographs of his family as I like. He invites me to dinner.

While Ahmet lights another cigarette I hiss at Abdul. "Whatever happens, you must coach me, help me, I do not want to offend Ahmet." (They both know I cringe when I walk past the meat souk with its pyramids of severed sheep heads, cascading curls of intestine waiting to become sausage casing.) Abdul laughs. "You don't understand at all. You can do nothing to offend this man. These Arab

peasants are simple men. *He is yours.*"

As the conversation continues, I turn to face The Olive Man often so he can see me smile. When we finally all admit fatigue — this evening must end — I walk Ahmet to the car he has purchased with the proceeds from his olive business. I intend to admire it, compliment him. With no translator standing nearby Ahmet hands me the keys to his car. I smile again, embarrassed by my endless clumsiness. I am very happy.

The thought that came to me as I prepared for bed: *I have been found.*

FROM THE BOARD

By **LLOYD GRAY**

Response to comments

During the past month, the Board has been tending to the constitutional issues of election of new board members and ratification of a new constitution, both of which were discussed at the annual meeting on April 27.

Last year, we asked for a large number of members to volunteer to run for vacant seats. This is due in part to organizational changes and in part due to recent resignations from the board. We have received some response, but it certainly has not been overwhelming. As it turns out, we will be starting the new Board year with a few seats still unfilled. We will again be asking for people to step up to the plate and become active members of the Alliance Board.

One interesting event that I would like to address this month, is in response to comments received from one member who was sent the election ballot and a copy of the proposed constitution. The member returned the constitution with comments written in, but failed to sign his or her comments, so I am unable to respond personally. I am taking this opportunity to respond in the *Empty Closet* as others may also have some of the same comments about the Alliance.

1. The Alliance should devote 70 percent of all our budget for education and advocacy. Of course this is a noble goal. I would prefer to see 90 or 95 percent of the budget devoted to education and advocacy. We try hard to keep overhead costs at a minimum and actually spend over 60 percent of the budget in education and advocacy services. That does not include the large portion of the *Empty Closet* expenses that rightly are education and advocacy efforts.

As in most organizations, there is a certain amount of fixed cost that is associated with staff, insurance, building, maintenance, etc. This amount stays relatively fixed regardless of the total outlays of an organization. Therefore, the more money that comes in and is spent on programs, the less this percentage becomes. In any case, the books of the Alliance are open and any member is more than welcome to call and request to see how their money is being spent. Our board meetings (second Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m.) are also open and anyone is free to come and see how the board operates and allocates money and monitors how that money is spent.

2. The name of the Gay Alliance

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should be fully displayed on the building. The full name of the Alliance is displayed on the entry door on Elton St. It is true that there is no neon sign or other large outside indication of the Alliance that can be seen from a distance. This issue has been discussed by the board on several occasions but it has not been resolved at this point. There are two points of view — "keep it quiet" and "shout it out." There probably is a middle ground, as there is in most matters, but we have not found it as yet.

The issue of cost has been brought up, but that is resolvable. Vulnerability seems to be the issue, for the building and more importantly for the users of the building. I would encourage you to speak to board members and make your feelings heard, or come and speak to the full board about this issue. Every board meeting devotes the first segment to members who wish to address the board. Give me a call (423-0690) and I will put you on the agenda to speak about this issue, or any other issue. I would like to see this topic debated again.

3. The picnic should be made less of a ripoff of people and their cash. If you need a fundraiser, then run one — don't disguise it as a picnic. In the time I have been associated with the Alliance, I have never felt that the fundraising aspects of the picnic have been disguised. The Alliance needs money to fund its projects (see #1 above). The picnic has been a major source of income for many years. While there are other fundraisers during the year, the picnic is still recognized as the premier fundraiser for the Alliance. It would be great if it didn't need to be.

And, indeed, it is more than just a fundraiser. It is a safe place for thousands of gays, lesbians and bisexuals to be in public with each other, see that we are not alone, and enjoy each other's company. We would like nothing better than to have another steady source of income for the Alliance, that would do everything that all its members would like and then throw a party every summer without the thought of raising money. That doesn't happen to be the world we live in today.

However, we are open to suggestions. If you can see other ways of funding Alliance programs, please share those with us. If you can see how we can change the focus of the picnic, please help us. We are just getting organized for this summer's picnic. Give me a call and I will get you involved and you can help us run this year's event. If we have not made it clear in the past that this is a fundraiser, you can help us do that.

4. The board should come out of its closet. I am not sure why you made this remark. And since you were not out of your closet enough to sign your name, I couldn't ask. If you would contact me and give me specifics, maybe I could respond. I would like to make a couple of comments about it, though.

Two years ago, the full names of all board members were reported in the *Democrat and Chronicle* and *Times-Union*. There have been several times when I, or other members of the board, have been interviewed on TV or the radio or newspapers, with our full names. Most of us, when we are elected to the Board and at other times, have our names

printed in the *Empty Closet*, which is available to the general public. Many members of the Alliance, including the Board, speak to groups throughout the area about being gay, and/or about the work of the Alliance. Many of us lobby locally, state-wide and nationally to push for our civil rights.

Everyone has a right to decide where and when they will step out of the closet and when they will not. (The Alliance sponsors workshops to help people with that issue.) As I am sure you are aware, there are times when it is not safe or wise to be "out." That is not anyone's decision but the person's making it.

The board does not meet in secret — its meetings are open. We invite speakers in — police, politicians, public employees, anyone we need to hear from or talk to. We just completed a tax lawsuit with the city, where many members of the board spoke publicly and vocally about the Alliance. In April, members of the Board spoke at the City Council meeting to urge passage of the domestic partnership legislation. It was obvious that night, to me, that far from not being out of the closet, many wish we would go back in it.

I would like to thank the person who sent in the comments because it gave me a chance to respond to some issues that I am sure others are wondering about. We appreciate hearing from the membership.

IN SEARCH OF SELF
BY THOMAS FRONCZAK
ASCW, CAC

HIV and love

For the past year and a half I have been writing about issues related to Self (esteem, intimacy, relationship, homophobia, and HIV.) This month I digress as I take a look inward at the personal transformation that has occurred for me as a result of working with those living with HIV.

It has been my experience that many individuals living with this diagnosis, their families, and significant others, have often experienced similar awakenings. While the work I do in the HIV field can be the most emotionally challenging at times, it is by far among the greatest growth-enhancing experiences I have ever had. Once again, I ask the question, who is the helper, and who is the helped? Who learns from who? M. Scott Peck said that the greatest growth experiences will include not just joy but also great pain as the price.

On a daily basis I am present with others who are living with this chronic illness. The life cycle appears out of synch as young adults are facing their own mortality. The range of persons is as young as 19, 25, 35, and up to 50 years old and beyond. AIDS is an illness spectrum that can affect any age, class, or sexual orientation.

A never ending question clients ask is "why me?" I have become comfortable with my inability to answer this question. I take comfort in a greater sense of order in the universe and spirituality to believe that it all makes sense on other levels of consciousness, beyond what our conscious mind could ever understand. I have learned to make room for "mys-

tery" in my life. I have learned to make room for the "I don't know" and "I don't understand's" in my life. The rational mind is a great tool, but a poor master.

Through my experience I have also been forced to look at my own mortality. Persons my own age and younger are dying. When was the last time you thought about the possibility of your own death? If you had two days to live, how would you choose to live those days? Who would you spend the time with? Who would you touch? Who would you tell you love? Who needs to hear that they care about them, and that they are important in your life? Which role models of yours do you need to thank? How would you re-experience family? With whom do you have unfinished business? What fears do you need to risk yet in order to grow?

These questions and more come to mind often. I have learned what is important in life, and what is not. I have learned how to live, and more importantly I continue to be reminded that our purpose on this earth is to love.

I am grateful to my Higher Power for bringing people into my life who I care about a great deal. I am thankful as I recognize that each person we come in contact with offers us an opportunity to learn about ourselves, and to love. How do you show compassion? What have you done that was caring for yourself and for someone else today? As I have often said, I am not here with all the answers. I am here solely to inspire.

The Chinese character for "crisis" is made up of two symbols, "danger" and

"opportunity." Within every crisis lies the potential for growth on different levels. When we talk of healing there is physical healing, but often neglected are emotional and spiritual healing or re-awakening. If the stories we weave from our tragedies are more optimistic ("I don't know why this happened, but I can deal with it," "I'm learning from this situation") then both physical and mental health are improved.

Let me suggest that we do not need to wait for crisis to enter into our lives to begin to effect change and growth. The time is now! Be aware that there is not one human being who will not experience anxiety and fear with change. All life represents a risk, and the more lovingly we live our lives, the more risks we take. If you are determined not to risk pain, or confront fear or the unknown, then you must do without many things: entering a relationship, changing jobs, friendships, meeting new people, increasing intimacy in your existing relationships — all that makes life alive, meaningful and significant. I'm reminded of the cowardly lion in the "Wizard of Oz," which is a beautiful metaphor for life. Courage was always within him. In fact, courage is not about the absence of fear, it is the making of action in spite of fear.

Leo Buscaglia used to tell the story of a woman who wanted a gorgeous red satin dress. Always asking her husband to buy it for her. He would say, "It's too expensive, we don't have the money." She never got her dress. One day she died and he said, "Do you think I should bury her in that dress?" The time to buy the

red dress is NOW! There is no tomorrow. All we are assured of is today. Do it NOW!

I invite you to live each day. When you eat with your family or friends, wonder what it would be like if this were the last meal you were to spend together. When you hug or kiss your lover, embrace as if it were the last time you would ever embrace or kiss. Be here now! Live in the now. Don't miss out on the possibilities today brings.

HIV has been my teacher, as well as all the courageous and wonderful people living with this condition, and their significant others. Let's not let their suffering go without honorarium. Let us all allow the "learner" within us to take notice and act upon the lesson. The lesson is simple. The lesson is LOVE! To my family and other important people in my life, (you know who you are) — "I LOVE YOU VERY MUCH."

Thomas Fronczak, ACSW, CAC, is a NY's licensed social worker in the fields of addiction medicine, recovery, sexuality concerns, and HIV infection. He can be contacted through his private practice with White Spruce Associates at 272-7210.

COMING OF AGE
BY MIKE STRASSNER, AGE 20

Going to the prom?

A hint of spring is in the air, and in my heart there is the warmth of a new love. I am convinced that when I least expect it, love falls right in my lap.

What started as a brief telephone introduction this past January through a common friend has developed into a wonderful long-distance relationship (and a phone bill that dare not speak its name). His name is Michael. (Yes — "Mike 'n Mike," "Mike-squared," "The Mikesters," "Mike-orama.") He's a senior at Homer High School near Cortland, a violinist, and an all-around beautiful and fun-loving guy.

He has come here to college to visit me a few times, and I have spent two weekends in Homer with his grandparents, with whom he lives. I went to his high school with him the first time I visited. Very few people in his town are aware that he is gay, so I was introduced to everyone as his "friend." (Ughhhh!) We had decided that it was best to "keep a low profile."

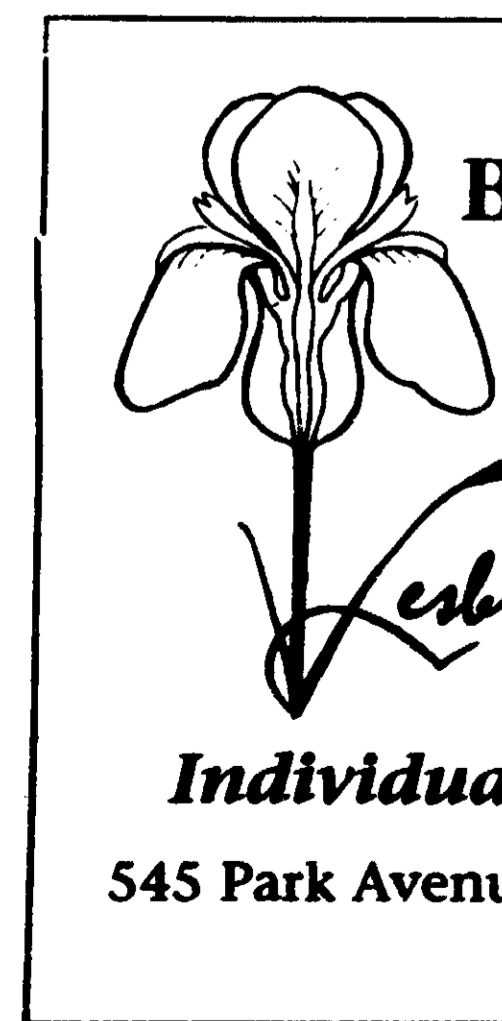
We hated not being able to hold each others' hands, not being able to look into each others' eyes, and just pretending that we felt no more for each other than did our straight counterparts. But when Karen, one of his girlfriends, called his house to see if I would be interested in her, it was the last straw. Mike decided we could no longer perpetuate this lie.

Although Mike's grandpa isn't officially aware that he is gay, his grandma received me with open arms as his boyfriend. His grandma is an incredible woman with a natural open-mindedness that she attributes to 45 years of tending bar. She says that she has known that Mike is gay since he was 12, so she found it almost amusing when he worked up the courage




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to "make the big announcement" to her last year. Despite her matter-of-fact acceptance, she adamantly advises, like my own mother, against coming out of the closet.

Disregarding her admonitions, the first thing that Mike did when he went back to school on Monday was to tell Karen that I was already taken... by him! It didn't take long for word to travel around his small school, and by the end of the day he was giving a mini-seminar on gay issues in his English class.

In the weeks that followed, Mike was called every name in the book. (Some of which have been quite creative, such as "Burt Pirate," to which he responds in a gravelly voice, "Arhh, me matey?") He has made special arrangements so that he doesn't have to change with the other guys for PhysEd because he is afraid of how he might be treated in the locker room.

A few of Mike's friends suddenly became very distant. One of his dearest girlfriends cried when he found out Mike was gay and wouldn't hug him anymore. Some of Mike's more "religious" friends argued with him and preached at him against his depraved lifestyle. One night he called me in tears because some guys were taunting him in the lunch room, making defamatory remarks and chucking pencils at the back of his head.

It would seem that he should've heeded his grandmother's warning, except that these instances of hatred became isolated and dwarfed by the incredible atmosphere of acceptance he felt from the administration and the student body as a whole. (Not just tolerance, acceptance!) His government teacher, who is also the

lacrosse coach, has gone out of his way to silence the bigots more than once. His school newspaper will be running an article about coming out and gay rights. Even the principal has called Mike to her office to express her support in his coming out process.

The vast majority of Mike's friends have been incredibly supportive. It seems that their relationship with Mike is stronger than ever. One by one, those who abandoned him have come around. It seems that they just needed time to mulch things over.

Last weekend, I sent to see his high school's production of *The King and I*. Afterwards, we went together to the cast party at the YMCA. At first, people seemed nervous around us, not really sure how to act or what to say. It wasn't until we got into a "chicken fight" (no pun intended) in the pool that people became at ease. I was sitting on the shoulders of Mike's friend Lisa and I bellowed at him, "Okay faggot, you think you're tough?" Looks of shock came over everyone in the pool, but soon turned to laughter. (There is something to be said for reclaiming those degrading words and using them as instruments of peace and confrontation.)

News travels fast in a small town. It didn't take long for the word to reach his grandmother's bar. Mike was surprised by her response. "This is your life, and I will respect the way you want to live it." She wasn't exactly pleased with his choice to "go public," but she trusted his judgment. Mike decided that this would be a good opportunity.

"Gram, I know that you're not gonna like this idea, but it is something that I

really wanted to do for a long time. Mike and I want to do the prom together."

His grandmother was very quiet for a moment and then she lifted her head, "Well, we'll have to find a way to make sure you can go."

HIV UPDATE
By JAMES S. C. BLOOMFIELD

Sex education

There's a new sex education project in town, and County Supervisor Bob King is in front of it. Called the "Not Me, Not Now" Campaign, it stresses teen abstinence, and the delay of sexual activity. There are big bucks being dropped into this campaign, and an even bigger political push.

First off, let me say that in my opinion this campaign is basically sound and good, but I do worry about the political dimensions. You see, abstinence is not a new message in sex education. Every reputable HIV/AIDS, STD or sex education provider has made abstinence an integral part of their message. After all, the safest sex is no sex.

But Supervisor King has conveniently forgotten that fact, and has made rumblings that the rise in teen pregnancies and teen HIV infections is due to the failure of our institutions to give "appropriate" messages of "abstinence." He has also seemed to conveniently forget that for many people, abstinence is not a personal option. They choose to live a sexual life, and that should be their right.

On the other hand, this program is

aimed at students aged nine to 15 years. In this sense, a program to reduce peer pressure, make abstinence a positive choice, and provide incentives for such a choice, is a good idea, too.

So, where's the problem? I'm concerned that with the push of total abstinence we might alienate those teens who choose a sexual lifestyle. Whether we believe teens should be sexually active or not shouldn't be an issue here. They are our brothers and sisters, citizens of this city, and we need to care for them as much as we care for each other. We may unintentionally cut them off from services, safer sex messages, protective barrier distribution, etc. My other concern is that this program is designed to reduce teen pregnancy, and therefore does not look seriously at the lesbian and gay teen population and their needs.

I am not suggesting that this program is wrong. I think it is a great program and it deserves all our efforts to make it successful. It is also my belief that we should watch this program carefully to make certain that diverse and appropriate services that have taken years to establish to serve the lesbian and gay community, and those individuals who choose lifestyles different from the mainstream, do not fall prey to political exclusiveness.

HIV/AIDS education is as diverse as the people it serves. It needs to deal positively with all aspects of a person's mental, physical and social well-being. It needs to empower people to make good and effective choices that will influence the quality of their life. "Not Me, Not Now" is a good message, full of empowerment and self-esteem for those who elect to say it. Let's not forget to em-

power and treat with dignity those who elect not to say it.

Postal Stamp Update: Currently, there is a review process underway by the U.S. Postal System to assess whether it should continue to issue the 29 cent AIDS stamp. It was introduced as a special limited issue, and we need to make our opinion known if we wish it to continue. If you would like to write a letter urging that the stamp continue, you may address it to: Citizen Stamp Advisory Committee, U.S. Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Washington, DC 20260-6753.

Hospice Update: This column is pleased to announce the opening of a new non-profit home for the terminally ill in the Rochester area. It is called "September House." This is the first home that states in its prime objectives that it will give priority admissions to AIDS patients.

It is located at 151 Centre Drive, Rochester, N.Y. 14623. The phone number is 475-0764, and you may talk to Executive Director Victoria A. Hinkley, R.N., about any admissions requests.

September House also needs volunteers to help with client services, and you may call Dennis Swarthout, the volunteer coordinator. Currently, September House has two private beds available, but they will expand in the future. This project deserves our every effort. How can we provide others with dignity in life if we don't recognize the need for dignity in death?

Two other hospice facilities could also use your support. Although they do not give priority to AIDS patients, they have well served our community over the years. They are Elisha House, 370 Chili Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14611 (464-8852) and Isaiah House, 71 Prince St., Rochester 14607 (325-2424).

Give them a call, and when you call September House, tell Dennis and Vicki that I said "Hi!"

Publication Update: Usually, reading AIDS publications is a tedious process of plowing through government reports or charts on seroprevalency tests. It is with great pleasure that I recommend a new magazine to you. It is called *POZ*.

It is hip, sharp, well written and researched by top names in journalism. (There's a great interview of Bob Hattoy by Donna Minkowitz in the current issue.) *POZ* is engaging, insightful, informative and very sexy in a dignified manner (how refreshing THAT is in an HIV publication!) It is my sincere hope that issue number two maintains the high standards that issue number one achieved.

Especially useful and insightful is a feature towards the back of the issue called the "POZ Partner." It is a collection of lists, phone numbers and addresses showing where you can obtain access to such programs as Buyer Clubs (for medications and supplements), Payment Assistance (for medications for people without insurance or on limited funds), other AIDS publications, HIV testing requirements for entry into other countries, hotline listings, and an HIV Standard of Care Chart (I have subscribed to this magazine just on the basis of this chart).

If you would like to order this magazine, it is published bi-monthly (six issues per year). It costs \$19.95, and they will send you a free subscription if you are HIV positive and cannot afford a subscription (write to them and they'll tell you what to do). If you wish to charge VISA or MasterCard, you can call (212)242-2163. Or you may write to: *POZ*, Old Chelsea Station, P.O. Box 1279, New York, N.Y. 10113-1279.

Columnists continued on p. 26

AIDS DIRECTORY

Free testing for HIV exposure is available from the New York State Department of Health: call the Rochester Area regional hotline at (716)423-8081, or (800)962-5063 for pay phones or calls outside Rochester. Deaf and hearing impaired people can call (716)423-8120 (TDD). Statewide information can be obtained by calling 1-800-541-AIDS. 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)442-2220 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.

HIV/STD 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. HIV testing, medical, experimental and pentamidine treatments; John Washburn Library; support groups; social work and case management services. Emphasis on early intervention for all aspects of HIV and AIDS. (716)244-9000.

Rochester Area Task Force on AIDS (RATFA) is a collection of agencies providing a multiplicity of resources and services to the upstate New York community. Their offices are located through the *Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency*, which also provides medical literature and newspaper clippings as well as demographic and statistical data for use in developing health care services. Kelli McMahon, (716)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) 75-3379. AIDS Training Project, (716)275-5693. *Deaf Access Services* at the Strong AIDS Center can be contacted at (716)273-1057 (TDD).

Planned Parenthood of Rochester and Genesee Valley offers testing and information (716)546-2595.

HIV Update GRC channel 12, Tuesdays 8:30 pm, Saturdays 9:30 pm. Produced by Physicians Association for AIDS Care (PAAC).

Threshold Youth Center provides confidential testing for young people ages 12-25. Fees on sliding scale, no one denied service. Threshold Center for Alternative Youth Services, 80 St. Paul St. 454-7530.

New York AIDS Institute Experimental Treatment Infoline. Up to date information on clinical trials and expanded access programs. Touchtone phone. 1-800-MEDS-4-HIV; (212)239-5523.

Human Planning Services of the Finger Lakes will provide confidential or anonymous free testing in Ontario/Wayne/Seneca Counties. (315)781-1749.

30 Good Reasons To Get Your HIV Care at Community Health Network:

Rachel, Jackie, Kathy, Sid, Craig, Mala, Dorrie, Mary, Kevin, Dan, Florence, Bill, Judy, Lorraine, Bob, Barb, Ken, Melinda, John, Sue, Mary Kay, Dobbie, Mike, Karyl, John, Gabrielle, Lisa, Georgia, Stacey, Kelly.

Every person at CHN—from the doctors, nurses, and social workers to the support and administrative staff—is committed to providing our patients with convenient, comprehensive, and accessible HIV care.

If you have HIV, or think you might, stop in and meet the best reasons to get your care at CHN.



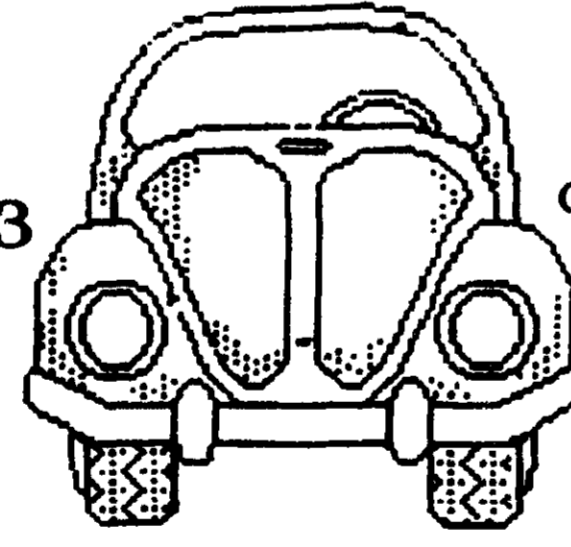
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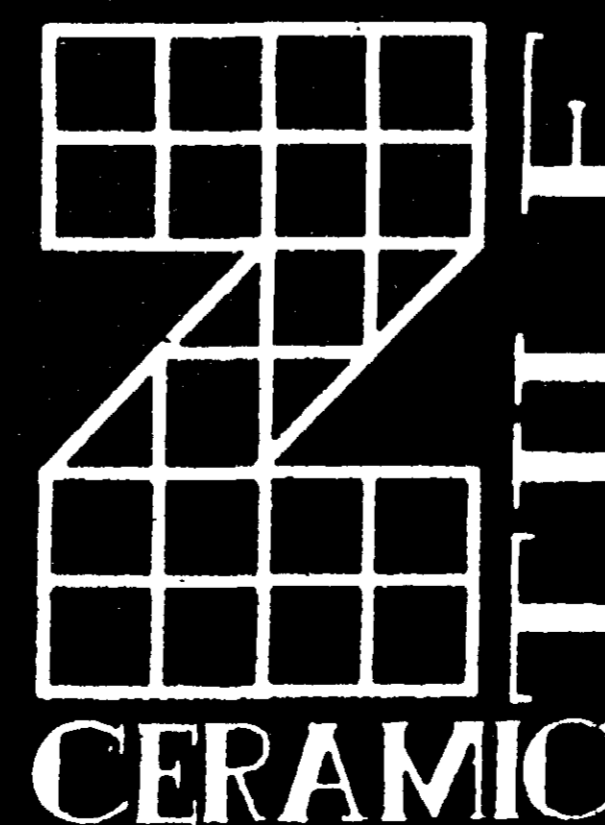
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GAY GROUPS

COAP (Come Out And Play) is a group of young adult gays, lesbians and bisexuals which has formed to participate in activities with people of similar age and interests.

Join us at our next meeting, May 31 at 7 p.m. at the GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Also, check out some of our events in the *Empty Closet* calendar, or call the GAGV Infoline at 244-8640.

COAP's purpose is to bring Rochester's young adult gay community together for a variety of activities. We provide a means to meet new people and have fun in an informal social setting. Some of our activities have included potluck dinners, Sunday brunch, coffee nights, volleyball and theme parties.

GALE/GV

Gay and Lesbian Educators of the Genesee Valley (GALE/GV) is a professional organization for individuals involved in the field of education that facilitates professional discussion and presentations, disseminates pertinent information and literature, and provides networking with colleagues.

The next meeting will be on May 19 at the Gay Alliance Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave., at 7 p.m. A panel from the Fairport School District will speak about the anti-homophobia initiative in their district.

All are welcome. Call 288-9342 for further information.

Political Caucus

The Political Caucus will be hosting an informal evening celebration on May 9 in recognition of the domestic partnership victory. The community is invited to attend.

Those who participated in the coalition that helped to make history here in Rochester are especially encouraged to join us. The evening will begin at 7 p.m. at the Gay Alliance Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

Sue Cowell and Don Bielak from the Empire State Pride Agenda will be on hand to briefly discuss the anti-discrimination bill that has languished in Albany for over 20 years. This is the next battle in our war for equality. Sue and Don have ideas as to how we can use the synergy we developed in Rochester to pass domestic partnership to make things happen in Albany.

Save the date: June 14 is lobby day in Albany. The Caucus will be renting a van/bus for the trip. Call 251-7437 for info or join us on May 9!

Film Festival '94

The Rochester Lesbian Gay Film and Video Festival is now in its second year. Last year the festival boasted sell out shows, in the end over 3,000 people attended. Over 70 films and videos were featured, including many that were made and viewed internationally.

The festival ended with a presentation and special screening by filmmaker Barbara Hammer at the George Eastman House Dryden Theatre.

Last year we showcased works from the 1990s. This year we've expanded our time frame. Along with new releases, we'll be showing older films that are almost impossible to see anywhere else.

Another feature of the festival is the Call for Entries. Entries are being received from a 200 mile radius of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway, including Canada. This is a great chance for independent film/video producers to get their work shown at an established Film Festival.

Deadline postmark is June 15. Send PREVIEW tape (VHS format) with return postage and packaging. A rental fee will be paid for videos/films that are accepted. You can send a SASE for a prospectus or send your tape, description, bio, PR materials, and stills/reviews, etc. to: Brad Pease, RL&GV c/o Gay Alliance of Genesee Valley, 179 Atlantic Ave., Rochester, NY 14607. E mail addresses: BP0957@ACSPR1.ACS.BROCKPORT.ED or MOMOTARO@MULTICOM.ORG.

Lutherans Concerned

By Dick Nielsen
Lutherans Concerned will hold our next meeting on May 10, at the Lutheran Church of Concord, 485 Holmes Rd., Greece, (between Long Pond and Latona Roads, south of Sears in Long Ridge Mall.)

We hope you will seriously consider joining us. Please come and share your ideas with us. We have had some very interesting meetings and great discussions. Come and join us, bring a friend, we

look forward to seeing you there. For further information please call Phil at 321-1284.

Lesbian Mothers

Lesbian moms and their children get together for a variety of activities throughout the year. All lesbians with children, as well as those considering raising children, are welcome. For further information, please call Pam Barrale at 533-2234.

Nayim

Upcoming Nayim events include participation in the Interfaith Holocaust Memorial Service on May 19 at 7:30 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd. A women's brunch and a summer picnic are also in the works.

About 40 lesbian and gay Jews and friends gathered at Temple B'nith Kodesh on April 2 to celebrate Passover with Nayim's annual Seder.

The Seder is the annual ceremonial meal commemorating the Exodus of the Jews from slavery to freedom. At the Nayim Seder, it was stressed that as long as gay and lesbian Jews remain closeted, we have not yet achieved full freedom. The 1994 Nayim Seder was the best-attended event in Nayim's seven year history.

On April 22, Nayim co-sponsored the visit of Rev. Jane Spahr of Downtown United Presbyterian Church to Temple B'nith Kodesh, where she was the main speaker at Friday night services. Spahr, always a dynamic speaker, was honored at a Kiddush after services sponsored by Nayim.

A Nayim delegation will attend the Northeast Regional Conference of Gay and Lesbian Jews in Montreal over the Fourth of July weekend. For further information, write POB 18053, Rochester 14618, or call 461-3386.

Out and About

May 21 features an Out and About canal path bike tour starting at 11 a.m. We'll stop for lunch after our ride. For more information, call Beth at 244-7159.

May 28 takes us on a rare lily expo in Bergen Swamp. Bring boots (it will be very wet) and a lunch. For further details, call Bob at 473-9384.

It's not too late to donate to our first annual garage sale on June 4. Call Terry at 654-7797.

To receive our newsletter, write to: Out and About, c/o GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.

Poetry group

Alternative Imaginations! poetry group is a gathering of local gay, lesbian and bisexual poets.

We read work by nationally known poets, critique each other's work when requested, do writing exercises and plan readings around the community.

New poets are always welcome. Come join us! Our next meeting is May 11 from 7-9 p.m. at the GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Call Beth at 244-7159 to find out more.

Lambda Radio Club

Lambda Amateur Radio Club consists of gays, lesbians and bisexuals who share a common interest in radio communications, and is an outreach program to help people to obtain their amateur radio license. Our next meeting is May 22.

Ham radio is an exciting hobby; there is something for everyone, be it computers, Packet, or listening to space shuttle communications, to name just a few. Our local group was founded in February 1990 and the national club was founded in 1975.

This month we are going to the Rochester Hamfest, which will be held at the Monroe County Fairgrounds on May 20-22, and we will wind the weekend down with lunch. This should be a great time for all involved. Please call Jim at 359-3337 for details.

Gay Men's Chorus

May and June will be busy months for the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus.

On May 6, the chorus departs for an overnight retreat at Camp Corey. Extended rehearsal for upcoming concerts, with time out for business and recreation, will be the order of the day.

Lilac Time brings the famous annual Gayrage sale on May 14, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 299 Caroline St., near Highland Park. If you have things to donate, call the Chorusline at 423-0650, and leave your number so we may call you back.

We will gladly come and pick up anything you wish to give. Contributions are tax deductible.

A busy month of concerts begins on May 19, when the Chorus will join in a memorial service for gay and lesbian victims of the Nazi Holocaust at 7:30 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd.

Then on May 21 we are off to New Jersey and Princeton University for a joint concert on Sunday afternoon with the Delaware Valley Men's Chorus. Saturday night will see us in Philadelphia to cheer the men of the Spruce Street Singers and renew ties with this group with whom we have appeared in the past.

Mark your calendars for June 11 and June 28. The first is the date of our ever-popular annual spring concert, at 8 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd. The Chorus will appear with the Delaware Valley Men's Chorus, who will be paying us a return visit. On June 28, we will host the Gay Men's Chorus from Karlsruhe, Germany in a "bonus" concert made possible by the presence of foreign delegations to the Gay Games and Stonewall 25. Watch for details.

Always wanted to make music with us? It's not too late to join for the June concerts. Call the Chorus line at 423-0650 and leave a message. Or just come for voice placement (no audition is necessary) at 6:30 any Tuesday night to our rehearsals at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 North Fitzhugh St.

Front Runners

It's spring! (That's what the calendar says anyway!) Front Runners had our first fun run/walk of spring on April 9.

The park paths were clear of snow, although the mud and puddles provided some fun for the children in us. It was fun seeing some old friends ("Just why do gay men like opera, anyway?") but our lone walker walked three miles alone. Just where were you on Saturday morning when the birds were singing and the squirrels were scurrying?

Come enjoy the outdoors with Front Runners/Walkers. We walk or run various distances (some of us are way out of shape, some of us are marathoners!) Afterwards we regroup and go to Brueggers or a diner for brunch. There are dozens of Front Runners clubs around the world doing the same things on Saturday mornings, as well as getting together for other social or athletic events at other times. While we do promote healthy lifestyles, we are determined to have a damn good time being healthy!

Before you know it, it will be summer and the Season of Pride Marches will be upon us. Whether you are doing our local Rochester March (July 17) or Stonewall 25 in N.Y.C., or both, get in shape now because nobody says you can't strut your stuff while being political!

Meet us on Saturday mornings at Genesee Valley Park, near the pool.

Groups continued on p. 27

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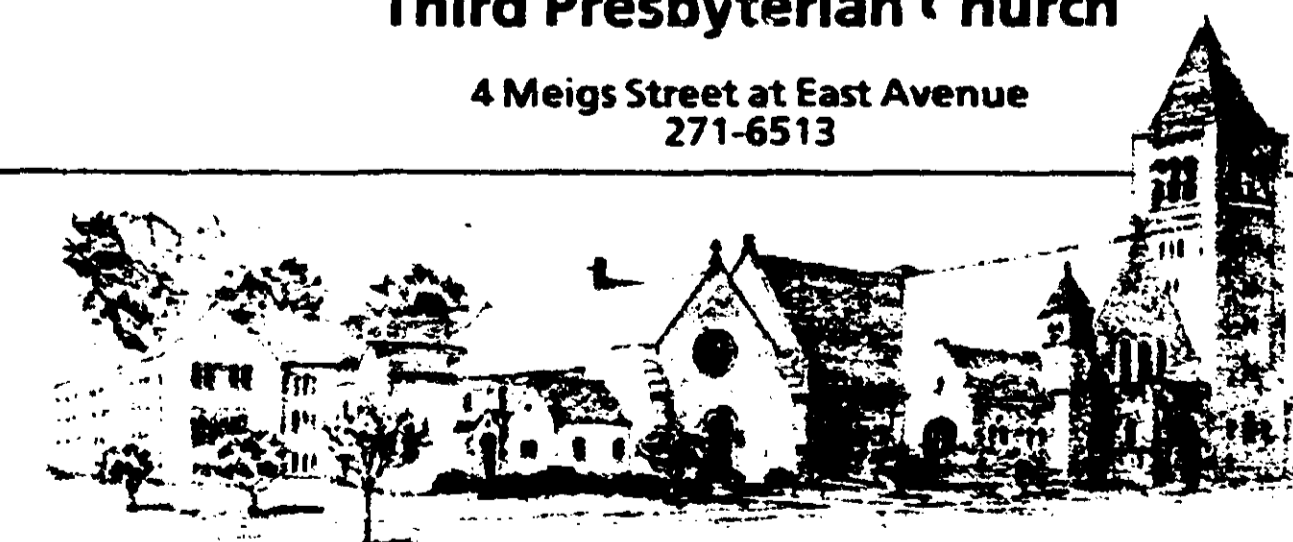
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Monday 1st and 3rd	7:30 PM	Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Support Group

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Columnists continued from p. 23

IN RELATIONSHIP

By PETER HOUSE

The Jackson-Parises

Tom and I spent a week in New York at the end of March. While we were there it seems that every bookstore — from the lesbian/gay bookstores in the Village to the huge midtown Barnes and Noble on Fifth Avenue — had a prominent display featuring *Straight From The Heart* — *A Love Story* by Bob and Rod Jackson-Paris.

The Jackson-Paris couple has been quite prominent the past few years — featured in many gay/lesbian magazines, appearing on *Oprah*, *Donatue*, and *Joan Rivers*, and making the rounds nationally at a variety of gay-related fundraisers. For the past year they've been "doing" the college lecture circuit, and last month they were featured speakers at the University of Rochester Pride Week. Most recently they wrote a book (*Straight From The Heart*) about their relationship, which also traces each of their lives from birth.

While they have many admirers, who respect all of the work they do in the name of gay rights, many feel that they mainly promote themselves, using lesbian/gay rights as a vehicle.

After seeing the book in every store I visited, I finally broke down and purchased a copy. It wasn't worth \$23, at least not to me!

It's definitely light reading, a lot like reading someone's diary or listening to a person's life story in excruciating detail. The pair also tend to glorify themselves, making statements such as, "Even as children we were both terribly concerned about the well being of the human race and felt that we had an obligation to leave the world a better place than we found it." But it did make good reading on the train.

However, even though I don't recommend the book and I see some evidence of truth in what their detractors say, I still appreciate the work they do and I'm glad they're doing it. Because while they don't have a lot to say to me or my peers, I think that they meet an important need for young and/or newly "out" people.

I'm used to seeing two people of the same sex in love. I've heard hundreds of "coming out" and "how we met" stories from lesbians and gay men. But the people who attend their lectures on college campuses haven't — and it's good for them to have these role models.

Since I had taken the time to read their book, I decided to attend their lecture last month at the U of R. Most of the audience was under 25. I saw lots of young couples (male and female) holding hands. Most of them appeared captivated as the Jackson-Parises told of how they met, described their wedding, and shared other juicy details of their romance. Nothing profound was said, the questions were routine and predictable, and the answers matched. Still, these young people gave the pair a standing ovation. The evening had touched them in a meaningful way. Ten years ago I

probably would have felt the same way. I guess I should qualify my review of the book. For people like me it seemed trite. But if you're under 25 and/or newly "out" it might be worth reading. Besides, if I don't say some nice things about them, people will just say I'm jealous of their looks.

IN YOUR STARS

By LAURIE TWILIGHT

May horoscope

ARIES

Your fiery sign is even better this May. With your ruling planet, Mars in Aries until the 24th, you'll have quite a passionate disposition. Sparks that fly from you can light up many romantic evenings. Just be careful not to ignite more than you can handle. In mid-May your fiery nature could turn a bit too hot, leaving those around you running for cover. Hold your tongue and allow opportunities for deepening relationships.

TAURUS

Mingle with the world. In the past, hiding in the closet has been a safe retreat, but it no longer serves your highest good. Communicate your inner wisdom. Those people who have watched you change over the past few years are waiting to hear from you. As you open, people will be drawn to your radiance. Those born in the last week of Taurus will be experiencing a transformational aspect leading into new directions around your birthday.

GEMINI

Don't let your energy scatter to the wind. Take the time to organize your goals, especially focusing on your work. Promote yourself in May as your silver-tongued techniques touch upon eloquence. Your sharp-witted style is both charming and quick with several planets aligned in Gemini this month. There's no stopping you once you put your mouth where your money is. Verbally, you are the master of seduction.

CANCER

The shell on your crab body is softening. As your self-esteem is boosted, so is your ability to trust. Others who notice this opening in you can draw you out even further. Abandon your old insecurities. Like an animal shedding their outer layer, you need to leave the shadow of your former self behind. Love, creativity, and attractions are in your stars this year. Come out of your shell enough to experience them.

LEO

You are feeling an urgency to place deeper roots and expand your quest for belonging. Home and family may go through some changes this year as you become more aware of your need for a secure home. As you become more grounded you are better able to experience your emotions, and are ready to heal old wounds from family of origin. Gaining new perspectives helps you understand and change your weaknesses as well as appreciating your strengths.

VIRGO

You have entered a time of powerful healing. Anything that has interfered with past relationships is dissolving. Old self-negating patterns are lifting. It's time

to be courageous and speak more directly about your wants and needs. Some people will leave your life, while other relationships will be strengthened. Clarity in communications will foster this change. You are ready to come out and join the world after a 14-year cycle of inner development. Share yourself with others.

LIBRA

You've entered a phase of hard work and preparation. You are getting ready to be involved in a more public domain in a couple of years. Presently you need to fine tune your own systems both emotionally and physically. Make any needed adjustments in your diet or exercise regimes. Also, clear your mind and emotions of past feelings or beliefs that don't serve your best interests. This year is one of self-improvements. Stay healthy and fit.

SCORPIO

You inspire others with your ability to transform. Old modes are passing away, as are the hard times in your life. Optimism has found you and you rather like it. Others also find you more appealing as well, especially in June when your sex appeal is high. Just watch out for overloaded passions that could lead to arguments later that month. Otherwise you are on a cycle of great improvement all year. Enjoy the ride.

SAGITTARIUS

Quiet contemplation continues to yield much food for thought throughout the year. However, there is time for a loved one as Venus brings flirtation your way in May. Love and attractions peak with the full moon lunar eclipse in your sign on the evening of May 24. Do something then to celebrate your power-

ful feelings. Dedicate the evening to showing your love to someone special. Also, seek answers to your soul searching questions. Much could come to you during this time.

CAPRICORN

As you have evolved, your ways of communication are evolving also. You are filled with novel insights and have been inspired by others to work with different ways of thinking. Now use this time to restructure your ideas and opinions and be concise in your expression of them. Others are impressed at your ability to breed focus out of chaos as your new order unfolds. For those born in the last week of your sign, you are still in the midst of radical change. Relax and let it happen.

AQUARIUS

There is a sense of completion this year as you have better perspective on your life's purpose. Now is the time to examine your values and resources, choosing those which serve you and those that are a burden. Eliminate that which isn't aligned with your new sense of self. Let go and be more resourceful. Also, make decisions about what you do want to draw to you, making sure it is truly useful.

PISCES

You are in a profound learning modality all year. Travel encourages new insights and broadens your perspectives. It is best to start adventures before June 12 or after July 6. If you need to travel at that time, do double check your arrangements. Mercury is in its backward motion then, which can foul up plans. If you aren't taking any trips, work on expanding your mind through other

forms of learning like school, or study with someone more experienced.

Laurie Twilight MA holds a masters in psychology and has a full time astrological counseling practice in Buffalo and Rochester. You can contact her in Rochester at 383-2199.

Groups continued from p. 25

You can't miss us if you come before 9:30 — we have a pink sign on top of a car or truck. (We do take the sign down when we leave for our walks or runs, so if you come late, you'll have to wait for us and hope your gaydar is working.) Some of us bring dogs (friendly ones only) to accompany us on our walks/runs. If Saturday mornings are not good for you, get on our phone list (554-5338) so we can set up runs at other times. See you in the park!

Women's Chorus

Be sure to mark May 22 on your calendars. This is the date Chris Williamson comes to town. Rochester Women's Community Chorus will join her in performance at the end of her concert with Tre Fure. Tickets are available now by calling 235-9336.

"Woman to Woman," a feminist chorus based in Cambridge, Ontario brought 40 of its 53 singers to Rochester on April 16. They joined voices with the RWCC to help usher in spring and celebrate women's energy.

The performance was held at the old St. Mary's Church in downtown Rochester. "Woman to Woman" arrived in Rochester at about noon that day and

rehearsed with RWCC for about two and a half hours. Members of the RWCC hosted the Canadian women for the afternoon.

Highlights of the performance included the resonating, harmonious collaboration of over 60 women's voices singing, "I Heard the Earth Singing My Name," by Marjan Helms, and a sequence of chants by Libana, the a cappella women's recording artists based in the Boston area. The program closed with an encore in which the audience joined with the singers in signing, "I'm sending you light to heal you, to hold you. I'm sending you light to hold you in love."

"Woman to Woman" performed songs by and about strong women, including selections in Italian and an African language, and a group of songs by Carolyn McDade, a spiritualist and composer. RWCC performed a wide variety of music ranging from a Broadway musical, to contemporary madrigals, to a women's chorus version of the '50s hit "Book of Love."

RWCC presented the Canadian group with friendship pins containing interlocking American and Canadian flags. Both groups are excited about RWCC's trip across the border in early fall. The RWCC is also planning its joint holiday concert with the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus, which will be held during the weekend of Dec. 10.

The RWCC is actively recruiting singers and non-singing support staff. It is a non-auditioned group. Any new members will be able to join the chorus in all forthcoming events. For information, contact 473-7365 or 223-1748 and leave a message.

The Word Is Out

"The Word is Out" is a public access television show created last fall as a media outlet for gays, lesbians, and bisexuals in the Rochester community. For those who are interested in getting involved, our next meeting will be May 16 at 7 p.m., at the Gay Alliance Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

The show presents a variety of interviews, comedy skits, reviews, news, and music in a half-hour format monthly.

City residents can watch the show on GRC cable channel 15 (check the calendar on channel 15 for exact day and time, as it varies). Currently, the show can only be seen by city residents. However, we hope to have it aired on suburban public access stations in the future.

Among some of the topics covered in past shows were the upcoming 1994 Gay Games, same-sex marriages and domestic partnerships, drag queens and cross dressers, the Bid From the Heart auction, and coming out experiences. In the future, we hope to include more Rochester-related news and events, as well as showcasing performers in the Rochester area.

We need your help! Volunteers are needed to help with writing, interviewing, and remote camera work. We also encourage submissions of videotaped skits, songs, and performances (no longer than five minutes, please).

We hold biweekly meetings at the GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. If you're interested in helping, or for more information and meeting times, contact Lew at 244-9627.

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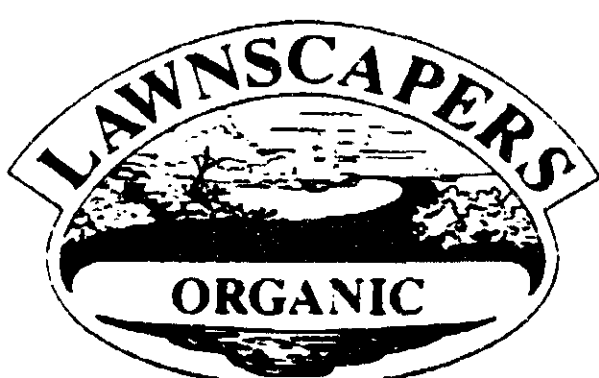
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RCL'S TOP TEN VIDEOS MAY 1994

- #1 WILD HORSES STERLING
- #2 ON THE MARK BULLWHIP
- #3 SECRET SEX CATALINA
- #4 ROLL IN THE HAY JOCKS
- #5 NIGHT WATCH MUSTANG
- #6 HOLE PATROL MACK
- #7 PRISON FEVER WESTERN MA
- #8 FAULT LINE ZEUS
- #9 BIG AS THEY COME JOCKS
- #10 BREAKAWAY JOCKS

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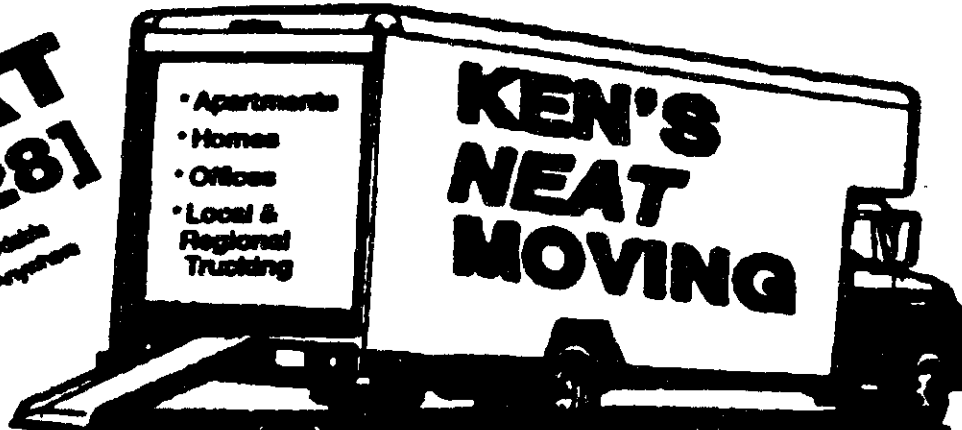
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CLASSIFIEDS

Classified ads are \$5 for the first 30 words, and \$1 for each additional 10 words. Send check or money order and ad, typed or written legibly, to Empty Closet, 179 Atlantic Ave., Rochester N.Y. 14607-1255. Ads will not be accepted over the phone.

The Empty Closet will accept only ads which are accompanied by a name and phone number. Neither will be published, but we need to be able to confirm ad placement.

We accept personal ads, but the advertiser must use his or her own home number or personal address. We publish personal ads from prisoners on a space-available basis. If you have a problem with a pen pal, let us know. The Empty Closet cannot be held responsible for any financial loss or physical injury that may result from any correspondence.

Announcements
Volunteer for the Empty Closet. The EC needs word processors, layout helpers, mailing and distribution volunteers, and photographers/reporters. If you would like to get involved in helping to produce Rochester's lesbian/gay paper, and can give two hours or more per month, please call Susan at 244-9030.

Wanted: lesbians and bisexual women to facilitate GAGV support groups and workshops. Experience helpful but not necessary. Call Tanya Smolinsky at 244-8640 for more information.

Wanted: women to play goalie for San Francisco Womens Ice Hockey Team at New York's Gay Games. Please call Gina at (800)462-6654.

Threshold seeks volunteers. Threshold Center for Alternative Youth Services needs volunteers to work in the Learning Center, a program providing instruction to high school dropouts who are working toward their GED diploma. Positions available: classroom aides; tutors for math, science and English; staff for computer resource room. For more information call Jackie Efejuku, director of educational and vocational services, at 454-7530.

Exposing discrimination. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force seeks people who have experienced discrimina-

tion in employment based on their sexual orientation. Cases should clearly show the negative impact of anti-gay discrimination in the workplace and provide arguments for federal protection. Especially looking for cases involving women and people of color, cases not in major metropolitan cities, and cases involving working class or labor oriented jobs. Individuals need to perform well under substantial national media exposure. Contact David Smith, NGLTF director of public information, (202)332-6483, ext. 3309.

Help wanted
Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press seeks managing director to lead non-profit women of color press/resource center through next phase of growth and development. Application deadline is May 15. For information call (202)667-1313, or send resume and letter of interest to Kitchen Table Search Committee, c/o Union Institute Center for Women, 1731 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 300, Washington DC 20009-1146.

Dancers wanted for shows and private shows. Males only. Call 425-7365, ask for Brian; or 454-5963; leave a message, I'll call you back.

Needed: musicians (harpist, guitarist, or violinist) to perform at Aug. 13 union ceremony. Pay negotiable. Also needed: DJ, to entertain at reception. If interested, please call Kathrin and Pam at 427-9182!

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Body/massage rubs. Finally, a "rubber" who's really sensitive! Let my skilled, soothing hands rub you the right way. This healthy (5'8", 150 lbs.) youthful male will put a spring in your step. Reasonable rates. Call (716)235-6688 direct, or leave a message only anytime at (716) 987-1314. Rochester based. Call today. Ciao!

Spring cleaning! Professional Cleaning Team, for one time service or regular maintenance. References available. All responsibilities negotiable. For a free estimate call 482-8126.

Personals
An alternative to the bar scene. Looking for over 30-40 single lesbians,

to form a support/fun group on a bi-weekend basis. Interested? Call Laurie-Jean at 865-0929.

The following prisoners are lonely and would appreciate hearing from anyone who will write:

Free pen pal. I am a very lonely man seeking friendship through correspondence. I am athletic, humanistic, educated, non-smoker, age 31, 5'9", 160 lbs. Seeking someone special, caring and responsible. Please write, you will be pleasantly surprised. Mr. Tony Cook, PO Box 45699-209170, Lucasville OH 45699.

WM, 24, 5'9", 180 lbs, blue-green eyes, brown hair. Seeking honest, sincere person to brighten my life. Enjoy sports, camping and laughter. Roy Plumley, Box 1368-202677, Mansfield OH 44901.

Incarcerated, soon to be released, age 29, seeks older male for special friendship. Robert Butler, 240-039, Box 120 3C 114, Lebanon OH 45036.

Roommates/Housemates
Roommate wanted. Are you looking for a roommate? Call the Roommate Network—we have hundreds of people looking. Personal, confidential and individual. Call 325-4643.

Free room and board in exchange for light household duties. Great position for tight person. Traveling executive looking for someone to live in. Non-smoking. Responsible. Call 454-3425, leave message.

Roommate wanted. Professional male to share two-bedroom home on Rocket St. Washer/dryer, cable, phone, off-street parking, bus line. Share kitchen. \$285 includes utilities. Deposit required. 482-7548.

Roommate wanted. Non-smoking male to share owner-occupied half house. All utilities included, washer/dryer, off-street parking, \$275 plus security. Available May 1, 482-7490.

Roommate wanted. Park Ave. area. Mature, responsible professional male looking to share two-bedroom apartment with same. This is a drug, pet and smoke-free environment. \$300 plus half utilities.

ties. 234-5246.

Roommate/housemate wanted to share three-bedroom, split level home in Gates. Quiet area, close to everything. \$325 includes all. Must be single and employed. Sheltie on premises. 426-4928, leave a message. Males preferred.

Roommate wanted. To share deluxe townhouse in Brighton near Loehmann Plaza and Highland Park. Nice patio, pool, laundry, near bus stop. Great for professional or grad student. Must see to appreciate. Rent \$360 plus. You a gay or bi man or woman, employed or FT student. No drug users or fundamentalists. Straights OK if you act gay in public. Call 271-7594, leave message!

For rent
Rustic private cabin on 30 wooded acres. Large stocked pond with island and row boat. Cabin sleeps nine. Rates weekly or monthly. One hour from Rochester. 482-7490.

For rent: Culver/Grand. Very nice two-bedroom upper half house. Own driveway. Laundry hook-ups, nice large sundeck, eat-in kitchen, new energy-efficient gas water heat. Lease and security required. Available June 1. \$495 per month plus utilities. Call 288-0032.

House for rent. Victorian SE Landmark District. Eight rooms, one and a half baths, alarm system, garage, washer/dryer, dishwasher, basement storage, porch, yard. No pets, children, smokers. Available Aug. \$550 plus. 461-4195.

For sale
Quiet rural homestead hilltop property, Jasper, NY (1 1/2 hours from Rochester, close to Corning and Alfred.) Charming Greek revival home with three bedrooms, sleeping loft, continuous kitchen/dining room, full bath, full basement with workshop (set up for making wine), 1994 installed central heat, classic woodstove in kitchen/dining area. Fully functioning, ideal as weekend retreat or year round home. Includes 24 x 36 barn, large pond, 65 acres cropland/pasture, and woods. \$89,000. For details and photos, please call Nancy at (607)962-1808.

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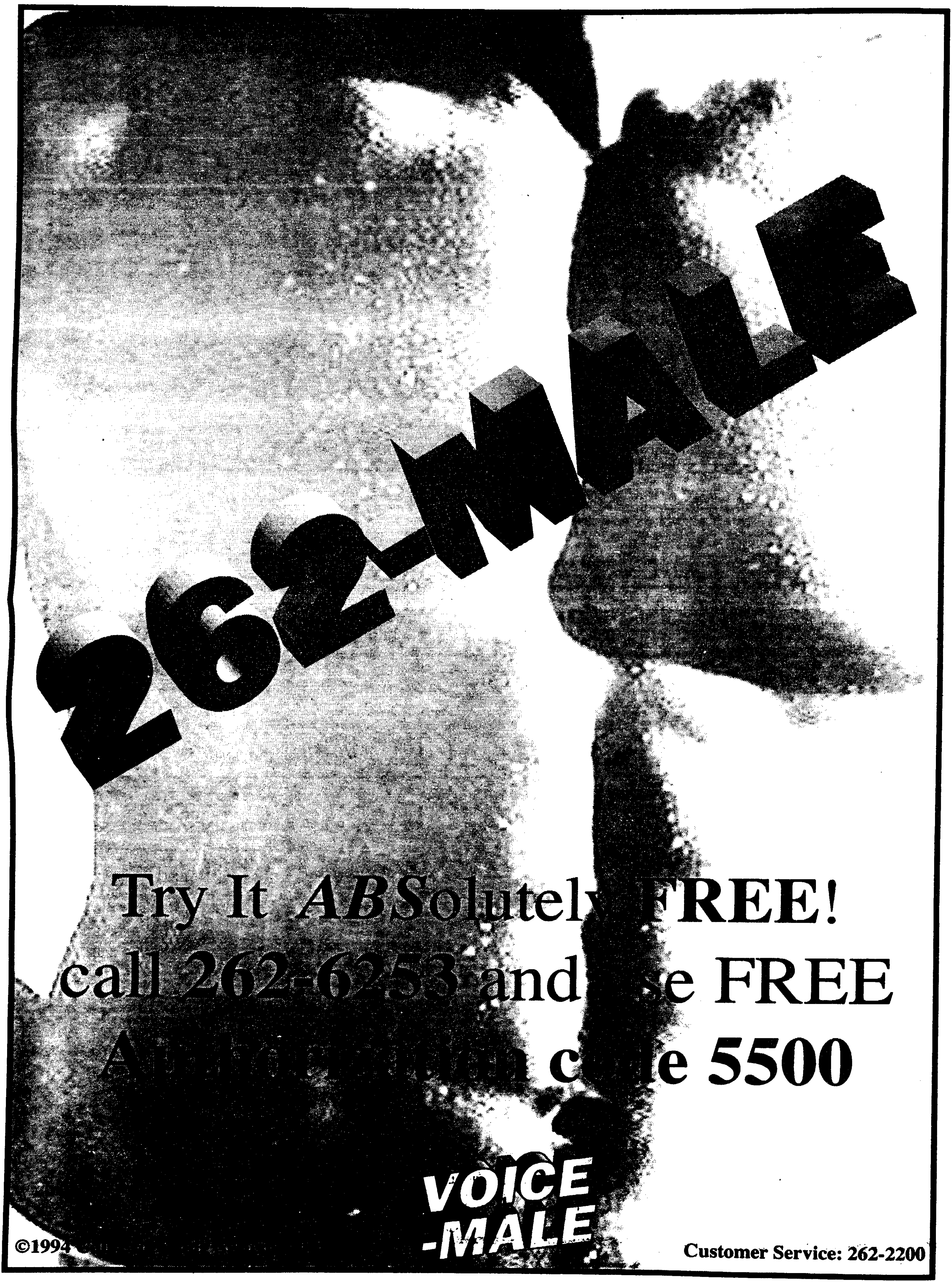
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W100 26, 5'7", w/a, ISO GIBWFF (24-40), w/a, honest, humorous, good self-esteem, caring, reasonably fit for healthy, fulfilling relationship. No M's or C's. #3764

W101 Bi-curious SWF ISO attractive BIF for fun, fantasy, new experiences and telephone conversations. Must be discreet free. No C's or M's. #3739

W102 Bi-curious SWF, attractive, 24, seeking fun, sincere, clean, disease free BIF for conversations and new experiences. #3664

W103 GIB seeking same for friendship, possibly more. #3146

W104 Bi-curious F, 23, looking for someone to go to the gym and work out with. #2927

W105 Bi-curious F, 23, looking for someone to work out with. Must be clean, fit, and active. #2263

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W152 Bi-curious M, 5'9", 120 lbs., athletic, into weight lifting, looking for fit, muscular, taller M (under 30) who enjoys culture and sensual, nice good times. #3683

W153 GWM 37, ISO dominant M (40-60), #3173

W154 Good looking WM looking for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3281

W155 GWM 30, good looking, thin, long hair, w/a, looking for M (late 20s), fit, semi-muscular, deep voice, straight acting, good looking. #2873

W156 Looking for cute M (21-32) for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3272

W157 Two GWM's seek BUCM's (18-28) for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3272

W158 Bi-curious M, clean, discreet, very open minded, seeking overweight CD BUCM. Must be safe, discreet, drug and disease free. Heavy plus. #2713

W159 Very handsome WM ISO dominant, large B/WM for fantasy fulfillment. #3153

W160 M 33, looking for submissive M for fantasy fulfillment. #3068

W161 Very dominant BTV looking for very sincere, honest M. Must be financially secure and drug free. #1129

W162 GWM 29, 6'0", 200 lbs., athletic, fit, no drugs or bad habits, looking for B/WM (under 35) for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3272

W163 GWM 28, 5'11", 170 lbs., affectionate, into little bit of discipline, looking for B/WM (under 35) for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3272

W164 GWM 28, 5'11", 170 lbs., affectionate, into little bit of discipline, looking for B/WM (under 35) for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3272

W165 GWM 28, 5'11", 170 lbs., affectionate, into little bit of discipline, looking for B/WM (under 35) for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3272

W166 GWM 28, 5'11", 170 lbs., affectionate, into little bit of discipline, looking for B/WM (under 35) for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3272

W167 GWM 28, 5'11", 170 lbs., affectionate, into little bit of discipline, looking for B/WM (under 35) for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3272

W168 GWM 28, 5'11", 170 lbs., affectionate, into little bit of discipline, looking for B/WM (under 35) for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3272

W169 GWM 28, 5'11", 170 lbs., affectionate, into little bit of discipline, looking for B/WM (under 35) for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3272

W170 GWM 28, 5'11", 170 lbs., affectionate, into little bit of discipline, looking for B/WM (under 35) for fun times and fantasy fulfillment. #3272

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