

BAGLSC Newsletter

Bangor Area Gay-Lesbian-Straight Coalition

Vol. 1, No. 1

September 1984

ABOUT THE COALITION

The Bangor Area Gay-Lesbian-Straight Coalition formed in July, 1984 in response to the violent death of Charles Howard, a 23-year-old man murdered in downtown Bangor, because he was gay. As its name implies, a diversity of individuals comprises the Coalition. Our common concern is promoting Human Rights.

The Coalition has formed task forces in order to pursue specific projects. These task forces include the following: Legal, Political, Public Education, Social/Support Groups, Organizational, Media, Speakers Bureau, and Funding. (Contact people and phone numbers for each are listed elsewhere in the newsletter.) Representatives from each of these task forces meet together weekly as a Steering Committee. The Coalition as a whole meets bi-weekly. All interested individuals are welcome to work with us.

UP-COMING BAGLSC MEETINGS

Steering Committee: Each Tuesday, 5:15-7 pm, Unitarian Church, 126 Union St., Bangor. To suggest agenda items, call either Ginny Holmes, 469-2917 or JoAnne Dauphinee, 989-3306.

Entire Coalition: Approx. alternate Mondays, 7:30-9:30 pm, Unitarian Church, Bangor. Dates: Sept. 10, 17 Oct. 1, 15, 29 To suggest agenda items, call JoAnne Dauphinee, 989-3306.

ACTION ALERTS

Next Court Hearing Date, Charles Howard Murder Case (see article elsewhere in newsletter): Friday, Sept. 14, 10 am, 3rd. District Court, Hammond St., Bangor.

Bangor School Committee Meetings: Monday, Sept. 17, 7 pm, Abraham Lincoln School, Forest Ave., Bangor.

MPBN (see article elsewhere in newsletter): Send letters protesting homophobic action of the station to: Station Manager, MPBN Radio, P.O. Box 86, Orono, Maine 04473.

ANTI-HARASSMENT ORDINANCE (see articles and model legislation elsewhere in newsletter): Letters of support for an anti-harassment ordinance for Bangor should be addressed to: Edgar Brown, Chairperson of Public Safety Subcommittee, Bangor City Council, City Hall, 73 Harlow St., Bangor, Me. 04401.

LETTERS

To BAGLSC,

I want to take this means of saying goodbye to my friends in the Bangor Area Gay-Lesbian-Straight Coalition. Some of you knew that I had planned for a good many months to make a change in my job, and in the last two weeks my plans have clarified and I have decided now to move to Boston.

My life, I can see now, came together this summer in the Unitarian Church in the meetings of the Coalition. I have found here friends who knew how terribly destructive homophobia is to us gays and lesbians and who felt we had a right and a duty to stand up for ourselves--not only because we are good people and deserve to be treated with respect and with honor but because we have so very much to offer the larger community. The straight world needs the contribution gays and lesbians can make.

I am aware of the work that is ahead in making the gay and lesbian community an effective force in Bangor. It is a matter of real regret that I will not be here for what I think is the most important work, passing a malicious harassment ordinance and a Gay Rights Bill. I wish you well with that work.

I am glad I knew Charlie Howard. He taught me courage. He taught me to say, "I am what I am." Fear is the only reason not to be what we are, and, in leaving Bangor, I want to wish the Coalition to have courage and not to be afraid.

I am deeply grateful, at a time in my life when things seemed uncertain, that I was able to make a contribution to the first weeks of the life of the Coalition. I appreciate the confidence you put in me, and I will carry with me to this new phase of my life a strong sense of the love we have for one another.

Thank you for all the good things you have done for me. And my love to all of you.

Dwight Cathcart

Dear Brothers & Sisters & Friends:

Upon reading the enclosed article from the Los Angeles Times Sunday, August 12, 1984, I took the liberty to try and track down some of the listed names mentioned in the article. After three attempts I received the number of Lee Nicoloff.

Reaching Lee, I told her who and why I was calling. She confirmed the article and what details lead to the forming of your organization.

Christopher Street West, the Los Angeles Gay Pride Organization of which I am a member, met on Tuesday, August 14. Our Board of Directors voted unanimously to send a donation so you can help bring some justice and understanding to Bangor.

Thru our outreach we are sending copies of the Times article to all Gay Pride Organizations in the country, to help you feel not alone in your fight.

In closing we would like to congratulate all of you for standing up for an injustice that was felt not only in your city but across the Nation. Please feel free to call or write in regards to any questions you may need answered.

Richard Palko, Vice President
Christopher Street West

(Enclosed in the letter was a check for \$500.00.)

Dear Editor & Dear Everyone,

The Bangor Area Gay-Lesbian-Straight Coalition is an organization that can take great pride in our accomplishments. We have connected large numbers of the Lesbian, Gay and Straight community. Both the human connections, and the mailing/resource list created, will continue to enhance our strength. The Coalition established our presence in the Bangor area, informing many-of our numbers, our pain, our fears, our anger, our humor, our hopes, our strength. We have generated a good amount of positive publicity, engendering our own pride as well as our call for justice. We have monitored, and influenced the perception of courthouse activities. We have identified pockets of support among the media, political, and education communities. Through the creation of task forces, we've connected people within the Coalition to others of like-minded approach or priorities. For ourselves, we provided an outlet for grief, anger, and hope. I'd like to think we generated a particularly special pride in ourselves, and projected our pride and strength to the full community and all who looked our way. And, we have the seeds of an organization that can have a lasting positive effect for justice--if only we will continue to embrace it, be patient with it, give it a chance.

Following the highs of an impressive beginning, it is not easy to acknowledge that we have run amuk. The various emotions that brought us together, after Charlie's murder, are not sufficient to hold us together. It was not luck that made our great meeting great. It was due to the insight and hard work and responsibility-taking of a few good people--Lee, Dwight, Richard, and others--to whom I say "Bravo!", and, thank-you.

It was inevitable, some say, that the number of people attending the general meetings would dwindle. Perhaps, frustration with the meetings stem from several basic flaws, flaws that have been identified many times but are too slowly (or not at all) corrected. It seems an unproductive task to go blame-seeking at this point. Though I think it is naive understatement to attribute the problems to simple growing pains. We have operated under some of the most oppressive (unwritten) rules imaginable: unlimited discussion on every detail of every comment; decisions by "exhaustion"; unprioritized (sometimes non-existent) agendas; denial of authority to moderators to close debate; and "entities" (moderators, steering committee, task forces) without people responsible for maintenance--how does one complain to, demand from, or otherwise communicate with "entities"?! I do not think we ever intended the general meetings to be endless discussions without form, substance, or direction. Just as task forces are expected to strive toward the goals their titles imply, the steering committee must steer.

I am not about to do the Pollyanna routine. Still, I am compelled to report any sign of hope to the disenchanted. The steering committee is alive and well, and made up of a number of "regulars" (and others) who are making decisions and taking responsibility for the decisions. We are a reasonably orderly group, proud of some steps already taken, and mindful that we must rapidly correct the general meeting problems that remain. We will never satisfy everyone.

Rampant "white horse" syndrome will not save us. No hero will ride in on a white horse and make everything OK. We will be too slow to entice some of you back, and the too-easily-frustrated may be wise to wait for clearer evidence of progress. The internal struggle over process will go on. Groan...But I am hopeful the struggle is moving into the steering committee with fewer and fewer spill-overs into the general meetings.

We came together in grief and outrage. We have done much good. We have made many mistakes with each other. We've neglected to thank each other sometimes. We have sometimes been insensitive and less than embracing. But I am convinced we will "get on with it". In some of our more shining moments we set some goals so Charlie would not have died in vain. Progress towards the goals of justice, political action, community education, the right to socialize in public places, security of civil rights, and an elevation of gay and lesbian pride--these will be our lasting legacy.

For justice and equality,
JoAnne Dauphinee

P.S. Just a more personal note. In spite of my own frustrations--deep, poorly expressed, and sometimes misdirected--there have been many moments of Coalition activity that struck deep into my heart. The moments when "we were so close, there was no room; we bled inside each others wounds...so raise the candles high, 'cause if you don't we could stay dark against the night; please, raise them higher again, 'cause if you do we could stay dry against the rain." (from "Candles in the Rain", Melanie) So, to all of you from me, Thank-You.

To Bangor Area Gay-Lesbian-Straight Coalition:

APPRECIATION FOR YOUR LETTER OF 26 AUGUST 1984

Let me express my appreciation for your letter supporting the action of the Bangor School Committee relative to the meeting of 20 August 1984. I, too, was pleased that the Bangor School Committee was able to determine a positive course of action which is consistent with sound educational practices yet responds to the needs of our community at this time.

Cordially,

Arthur N. Pierce
Superintendent of Schools

Coalition Address: BAGLSC, P.O. Box 1805, Bangor, Me., 04401, tel: 989-3306

Newsletter Address: Lee Nicoloff, 314 Main Rd. No., Hampden, Me., 04444,
tel: 862-2078

REGISTER TO VOTE. YOUR VOICE COUNTS.

SEPT. 14 SET FOR NEXT HEARING IN CHARLIE HOWARD MURDER CASE

Scott Hamilton

The first phase of a two-part probable cause hearing was held at Third District Court in Bangor on Monday, August 20th, regarding the fatal drowning death of Charlie Howard.

After nearly six hours of testimony by witnesses, and cross-examination by defense attorneys, Judge David Cox ruled that a juvenile crime had been committed, and that the defendants, Dan Ness 17, Shaun Mabry 16 and James Baines 15, had committed said crime.

Cox set Sept. 14th as a date for continuation of the hearing to determine the background and disposition of each defendant individually. The three defense attorneys appealed for a charge of manslaughter.

State Attorney General's assistant Thomas Goodwin called several witnesses to the stand, the first of which was Roy Ogden, Howard's companion the night of the crime. Ogden testified he saw a red car circle the block and return to the bridge where he thought four people got out of the car. He said one pushed him and that as he and Howard were chased across the street by them, Howard tripped on a curb. Ogden stated that Howard was kicked repeatedly while down and then thrown over the bridge railing, into the stream below. He said he heard Howard scream "Help, fire!" several times while being chased and kicked. But his cries changed to "I can't swim, I can't swim!" as he was being thrown over. Ogden also stated that after seeing Howard struggle in the water, he pulled a fire alarm on a nearby bank building and that he was threatened by one of the assailants, should he repeat anything about the incident.

After recess, the next witnesses were Jennifer Vafiades 17, and Shawna Vanidestine 15, both passengers in a vehicle driven by Shaun Mabry the night of Howard's death. Vafiades testified that as they approached the corner of State and Main Streets east-bound, she heard James Baines, who was seated between she and Vanidestine in the back seat say, "There he is!" Vanidestine said she saw Dan Ness, who was in the front passenger seat, tug the steering wheel to coax Mabry to pull over on the left side of State Street. Vafiades tried unsuccessfully to start the car after the three young men had gotten out, stating she "didn't want to see a fight". Vanidestine said she had heard Howard shouting "Help, fire!" and that she was able to see the three defendants kicking him and his leg going over the bridge railing. She reported that, Ness and Mabry shook hands, laughing, as they returned to the car. Vanidestine expressed concern to them for the person they had thrown into the stream, to which they replied, "He won't die."

Both young women testified there were no drugs or alcohol involved with the incident.

State Medical Examiner Henry F. Ryan was next called to the stand. Ryan said a full post-mortem was performed on Howard at the Augusta Medical Center. The body was weighed and measured at 138 pounds, 5 feet, 9 1/2". External injuries included an abrasion on the right cheek, a hemorrhage on the right eye, deviation of the nasal cartilage, an inch long laceration from the left lower lip to the chin, and many tiny lacerations inside the mouth.

Internal examination showed that Howard's lungs were extremely voluminous, and that mucus was blocking the bronchi. There was also bilateral hemorrhaging in the ears, typical of drowning victims.

The cause of death was determined to be death by asphyxiation due to drowning, complicated by acute bronchial asthma. Ryan said that the asthma was most likely to be brought on by stress and activity, such as running, and that the absence of bruises could have been due to the sudden death.

The state then called Sergeant Tom Placella, who played taped interviews with Dan Ness and James Baines. There were gasps in the courtroom when Ness' taped voice said that Howard had "jumped over the railing". Ness retracted the statement after Placella told him that witnesses had seen him throw Howard over the bridge. Ness then admitted that all three had kicked and thrown him in. Ness said that he was "not thinking at the time," that what he had done was "stupid, very stupid," and "There's not much I can do about it now."

The Baines tape revealed that Baines had seen Howard before, and that Howard had tried to put his arm around him. It was Baines' idea to stop on the bridge, and he admitted to kicking him and throwing him over. Baines said he saw Howard hit the water.

Sergeant Roy McKinney then played a taped interview with Shaun Mabry. Mabry said "Jim (Baines) kicked him in the face; Dan (Ness) kicked him in the back. They picked him up by the hair and threw him over. Then Dan threatened Ogden." Baines

then said they had gone to the bridge the next day and realized that where Charlie Howard had been thrown into the canal, "There was no way out."

HELP OTHERS FIND OUT ABOUT BAGLSC. PASS THE NEWSLETTER ON TO A FRIEND!

ANTI-HARASSMENT ORDINANCE--SEVEN MEMBERS MEET WITH EDGAR BROWN

Richard Forcier

Seven members of the Bangor Area Gay/Lesbian/Straight Coalition met with Edgar Brown, the chairperson of the Public Safety Subcommittee of the Bangor City Council.

We spoke of the need for the City Council to take a strong, unequivocal stand against the victimization of certain segments of the human community in Bangor in the form of an anti-intimidation, anti-harassment, anti-violence ordinance.

This ordinance would differ from existing legislation in a couple of specific ways. It would overtly include sexual orientation in the categories of protected persons from all forms of victimization. And such legislation would make it easier to prosecute perpetrators of violence, harassment, and intimidation, because the police would have clear, specific, legal instructions as to how to deal with incidents of victimization.

Please read the model legislation below that was passed in Seattle, Washington in June 1984.

Also, please write to Edgar Brown at City Hall in support of this ordinance. His subcommittee is charged with "reporting out" any legislation dealing with public safety.

It is vital that you let Edgar Brown, chairperson of the Public Safety Subcommittee know exactly how you feel.

MODEL ANTI-HARASSMENT LEGISLATION--SEATTLE, WASH.

The following is the complete text of an anti-harassment ordinance passed in Seattle, Washington in June. A copy of this ordinance has been given by BAGLSC members to Edgar Brown, chairperson of the Public Safety Subcommittee of the Bangor City Council, for study and action:

"An ordinance relating to the control of harassment based on a person's sexual orientation and other protected categories; adding a new section 12A.06.160 to the Seattle Municipal Code to define a new criminal offense.

Be it ordained by the City of Seattle as follows:

Section 1. There is added to the Seattle Municipal Code a new section 12A.06.160 as follows:

12A.06.160. Malicious Harassment

1) A person is guilty of malicious harassment if he or she maliciously and with the intent to intimidate or harass another person because of that person's sexual orientation, gender, marital status, political ideology, age, or parental status:

- a) Causes physical injury to another person; or
- b) By threat places another person in reasonable fear of harm to the person or property of a third person, provided however, that it shall not constitute malicious

harassment for a person to speak or act in a critical, insulting, or deprecatory way so long as his or her words or conduct do not constitute a threat of harm to the person or property of another person; or

c) Causes physical damage to or the destruction of the property of another person.

2) "Threat" means to communicate, directly or indirectly, the intent to:

a) Cause bodily injury to another; or

b) Cause damage to the property of another; or

c) Subject another person to physical confinement or restraint.

3) "Sexual Orientation" includes heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality.

4) Every person who, in the commission of malicious harassment, shall commit any other crime, may be punished therefore as well as for the malicious harassment, and may be prosecuted for each crime separately.

HAVE YOU BEEN VICTIMIZED?

Richard Forcier

As we prepare to work for the passage of the anti-intimidation, anti-harassment, anti-violence ordinance in Bangor, it is vital that we document and collect all incidents of victimization. We are interested in both the incidents that occurred prior to and subsequent to Charlie Howard's death. Such evidence will dramatically support the need for such legislation. Please contact Richard Forcier with such information. (947-1253)

HOMOPHOBIA AT MPBN

Lee K. Nicoloff

A letter to the editor of Our Paper this month described an unfortunate incident involving members of Northern Lambda Nord and MPBN radio. Briefly, NLN members had volunteered to staff phones during the recent fund-raising campaign for MPBN. Similar to an earlier contribution challenge made during the campaign, NLN offered a free subscription to Our Paper, A Voice for Lesbians and Gay Men in Maine to the first person who called in to pledge \$30 or more and asked for the paper. NLN asked that the full title should be read in order that a caller would know what they were going to receive. Only "Our Paper", however, was read on the air. After further discussion with NLN, MPBN decided to remove the entire contribution challenge. NLN then proposed to match the first donation to MPBN of \$30 or more from someone who called in from the Bangor Area Gay-Lesbian-Straight Coalition. This challenge was also rejected.

MPBN's apparent willingness to accept contributions of time, energy, and financial support from the lesbians and gay men of Maine, combined with an unwillingness to acknowledge this significant contribution by saying the words "lesbian" and "gay" on the air, is very disturbing.

I am writing a letter of protest to the station manager of MPBN, letting him know that: 1) I am disturbed by the station's handling of NLN's contribution challenges and by the apparent homophobia evidenced in this action, 2) I have contributed financially to the station in the past, but I will not be renewing my contribution pledge until I have been made aware of specific action taken by MPBN to assure non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in its operation policies, and 3) I believe that NLN deserves a formal apology.

Let MPBN hear from all of us. Address your letters to: Station Manager, MPBN Radio, Box 86, Orono, Me. 04473

SPEAKERS BUREAU

We are a group of people interested in addressing the need to increase awareness, understanding and dialogue concerning gay/lesbian issues in the community. We see a speakers bureau as a useful tool to meet this objective.

Two workshops are planned for September to share information as well as prepare ourselves for speaking. If you are interested in speaking (with others) to area groups, plan on coming Wednesday, September 19, from 7-9 pm, to the Unitarian Church on Union St. More details will be available then. Hope to see you there!

* * * * *

A BAGLSC picnic has been scheduled for Sat., Sept. 29. Time and place to be announced.

* * * * *

DEBBIE FIER--IN CONCERT

Debbie Fier, a singer, songwriter, and pianist, will be appearing in Bangor on Saturday, September 8. Debbie's music is a concoction of jazz, soul, folk and Latin. She released an acclaimed album called "In Your Hands" in 1982. She has shared the stage with Phoebe Snow and Theresa Trul, and performed at the Michigan Women's Music Festival. Debbie has also played concerts in support of NOW and the Nuclear Freeze.

The concert is scheduled for Sat., Sept. 8, 8 pm, at the Unitarian Church, Bangor. Tickets are \$4 and available at the door. Childcare will be provided. The concert is a benefit for the Bangor Area Gay-Lesbian-Straight Coalition.

BAGLSC MEETING SCHEDULE CHANGE

A decision was made at the last large group BAGLSC meeting to change those meetings from an every-week to a bi-weekly schedule. The Steering Committee, however, will continue to meet weekly. For a chedule of meeting dates, see the schedule on the front page, or the monthly calendar.

WILDE-STEIN MEETINGS

Wilde-Stein starts its weekly meetings on Sunday, September 2, at 7 pm in the South Bangor Lounge, Memorial Union, UMO. All are welcome.

LISTING OF SUPPORT GROUPS IN THE BANGOR AREA

prepared by the BAGLSC Social/Support Groups Task Force

WILDE-STEIN CLUB: Wilde-Stein was created in 1973 to fulfill a three-fold purpose: to educate the general public, to provide social activities for both the homosexual and the homophile, and to provide support for the homophiliac lobbying effort.

As the world changed, so now must Wilde-Stein. Our present scope encompasses our weekly directional meetings, guest speakers, monthly dances, and a speaker's group that give lectures as requested.

Membership is restricted neither by sex nor sexual preference. Our meetings and dances are open to the general public. We are attempting to change social attitudes through our example in the hope that Gay men and Lesbians can one day live in an open society free from repression and discrimination. For more information, contact J. P. at 942-2638

MEN'S EDUCATION NETWORK (M.E.N.): M.E.N. is a group of men committed to breaking through our isolation as men and to changing the ways we relate to each other and women.

Our primary activity is the formation of support groups where straight, gay and bi-sexual men can relate to each other and their own masculinity and learn to share and grow in a caring, supportive environment.

We have meetings and will have potlucks, socials, and cultural events. We are creating a network of groups and individuals, acting to support men's growth, the women's movement, and lesbian and gay freedom. Contact Bob Garrecht or John O'Keefe at P.O. Box 1822, Bangor.

INTERWEAVE: The purpose of Bangor Interweave is to provide gay men and lesbians an opportunity for social contact in an atmosphere free of prejudice and intolerance; to support fellow gay men and lesbians in a positive and live-affirming way; and to offer its members an opportunity for spiritual and personal growth, intellectual stimulation and responsible social action.

Interweave meets every first and third Saturday of the month, at 6 pm at the Unitarian Church, potluck supper and meeting.

KIDS OF GAY AND LESBIAN PARENTS SUPPORT GROUP: Kristen Ramsay is willing to organize a group for children with gay or lesbian parent(s). Any age child is welcome. For information, call her at 862-4556.

MAINE LESBIAN FEMINIST NEWSLETTER (MLF): This is a newsletter for and about lesbian and feminist issues. It lists things going on state and nation wide. The spokeswoman said she'd like to see more articles, poetry, artwork and general sharing of lifestyles and feelings. Anyone interested is more than welcome to do so by sending them to MLF, Box 125, Belfast, Maine 04915 or by calling Donna, 342-5069 or Jean, 342-5946.

LESBIAN STEP-PARENTING: This is a support group for lesbians that are step-parenting their lover's children. This group hasn't been meeting during the summer months, but plans to re-organize in the fall. For more information call Nancy Gentile at 469-7737.

LISTING OF CONTACT PEOPLE FOR BAGLSC TASK FORCES

Legal	942-3379	Scott Hamilton Fred Hodge
Media	947-7233	Duncan Langille
Education	843-5483	Kay Wilkins
Social/Support Groups	884-8857	Bob
Political	947-2003	Diana
Funding	469-2917	Ginny Holmes
Organization	942-2638	John Filgas
Speakers Bureau	942-3476	Jennifer Noyes

FUN & GAMES FOR ERA

TUESDAY, SEPT 11th 8-10 p.m.

BAGLS COALITION MEMBERS & FRIENDS
ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO

FUN & GAMES NITE AT 87 SUNSET STRIP

(IN BREWER, OFF PARKWAY SOUTH)

FUN TRIVIAL PURSUIT POOL BACKGAMMON PING PONG MUSIC MUNCHIES

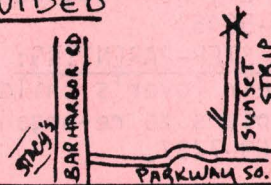
ERA DONATIONS OF \$5 (OR MORE)
PUTS YOUR NAME IN THE 10PM DRAWING
FOR ONE-FOURTH (!) THE NITE'S TAKE!!!

DONATIONS OF ANY SIZE WELCOME BUT
PLEASE TRY TO GIVE A LITTLE SOMETHING, EH?

*COFFEE, TEA, & MUNCHIES - PROVIDED

*BYO - SODA, BEER, ETC

FOR DIRECTIONS (OR QUESTIONS)
CALL JOANNE 989-3306



CALENDAR OF EVENTS--SEPTEMBER 1984

Sat. Sept. 8--Debbie Fier in Concert, 8 pm, Unitarian Church, 126 Union St., Bangor

Sun. Sept. 9--Lesbian/Gay Alcoholics Anonymous meeting.
open step. 4 pm, Unitarian Church, Bangor

--Wilde-Stein mtg., 7 pm. South Bangor Lounge,
Memorial Union, UMO, Orono.

Mon. Sept. 10--BAGLSC large group mtg. 7:30 pm, Unitarian Church, Bangor.

Tues. Sept. 11--BAGLSC Steering Committee Mtg. 5:15 pm, Unitarian Church, Bangor.

--Fun and Games for ERA, 8-10 pm, 87 Sunset Strip, Brewer
(JoAnne's house). 989-3306

Thurs. Sept. 13--Lesbian/Gay AA mtg., Unitarian Church, Bangor

Fri. Sept. 14--Court Hearing, Charlie Howard Case--10 am, 3rd District Court,
Hammond Street, Bangor

