

NETWORK NEWS



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Visibility and Resistance - toward an inclusive Maine

by Naomi and Madeleine Winterfalcon

June 19th is known as Juneteenth, because it was the day, at the end of the civil war, when word first reached slaves in the deep south that they were free. It is a day to celebrate the end of tyranny and the prospect of a better future. If you look at the history of the African-American struggle for freedom, Jewish resistance to the Holocaust, or countless other histories of people fighting oppression, there are always stories of hope in the midst of despair. Stories of people resisting oppression in many ways and against great odds, often with little reason for hope.

Jews working in the munitions factories of Treblinka smuggled out enough powder to blow up the crematorium in the death camp. Nineteen year old Vitka Kempner snuck out of the Lodz Ghetto at night and blew up Nazi troop transport trains. Native Americans helped slaves escape the white slaveholders. The early struggle for civil rights meant laying your life on the line and many people died rather than accept racism as a way of life. "Oh Freedom" is a song about people who, after being trans-

ported in slave ships, drowned themselves rather than come ashore and be enslaved. During the witch burnings, in Europe, when every arrest meant torture and the naming of more names of women for persecution, whole groups of women walked into the sea to drown rather than aid the Christian hierarchy in their genocidal practices.

In many ways the full story of lesbian and gay history has just begun to be written. The brutality of the pre-Stonewall era is recently unearthed, and the civil rights struggle has left the impression for many people inside and outside the gay community that lesbians' and gay men's struggles are about rights and not about survival. Though the threat of violence is a part of the lives of lesbians and gay men on a daily basis, it is not widely known how often it is a factor in our lives. This is one of the reasons for the belief that gay people do not face discrimination. Many people in Maine do not believe that gay people suffer discrimination in this state, and thus are susceptible to the argument that our need for protection is about the oxymoronic

concept of "special rights".

Who are those who have resisted against all odds in the gay community? We know a few names, but more and more and more the record we have is of the privileged modeling assimilation. Who are the people on the front lines now who are fighting to survive in remote and often hostile climates?

What does it mean to be a gay mill worker, or a lesbian migrant blueberry picker, or a native Mainer growing up in rural Maine facing questions of sexuality alone? The price paid by the silence and distortion about our lives has ramifications far beyond what happens to us as individuals. If the lies and half-truths told by the religious right are allowed to stand without opposition then we eventually begin to adopt them as well.

Until the totality of lesbian and gay lives is visible to everyone, there will be little understanding of who we are or what it has taken us as a people to reach this point.



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Mission Statement

The mission of the Maine Rural Network is to promote visibility and security for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender people living in rural Maine, and to work for social, educational and economic justice for all Maine people. The Maine Rural Network seeks to accomplish this by empowering individuals living in rural Maine to organize, establish and support autonomous groups locally and to create a network statewide.

Publication Information

Network News is published quarterly in March, June, September and December. If you would like to contribute a calendar item or short article please send it to us by the 15th of the month prior to the quarterly publication date.

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES IN SO. MAINE

The following openings are available to help provide comfort and a quality of life for individuals living with HIV/AIDS in Maine: one-on-one emotional support through the Buddy Program; transportation assistance; practical Support (as needed shopping or moving help)

Merrymeeting AIDS Support Services, Peabody House, The AIDS Project, and AIDS Lodging House

will be providing joint orientation and training sessions for interested volunteers on Saturday, 3/3 and 3/10 8am-4pm, Williston West Church, Portland. Call Shelley at 774-6877 or Michael at 725-4955 for more information.

We look forward to having you join us.

**Have You Moved?**

If you receive your newsletter by mail, please notify us of any address change or seasonal mail stoppage, since we are charged for every newsletter that is returned. Thanks!

Networking

Maine Rural Network has its own list serv. If you are on-line and would like to be part of this growing list where you can start a discussion, post an event, receive information about current events, just e-mail MRN at nomad@watchic.net. We will add you to the list.



April 6-8, 2001

Keynote Speaker

(www.gpac.org)

Identity Program at New York Gay and Lesbian Community Center

In addition to the annual college student conference (to which community members and youth are invited), a one day conference will be presented Friday, April 6. This will be a day of workshops, focus sessions, speakers, networking, and more for faculty, staff, professionals and community members who work with GLBTQA students and other youth.

Registration

Students who register prior to March 15 pay only \$25 (includes reception Friday evening, breakfast Saturday and Sunday, lunch Saturday, all speakers, workshops and entertainment). Faculty, staff and professionals who register prior to March 15 pay only \$25 for Friday (including breakfast, lunch, the evening reception, workshops, speakers) or \$40 for the entire weekend (Friday morning through Sunday).

There is specific information (and on-line registration) available on our website: <http://www.usm.maine.edu/glbttqa/conf>

Here is a small sample of workshops - there is room for more. Please encourage your colleagues from UNE to submit a program proposal:

Friday:

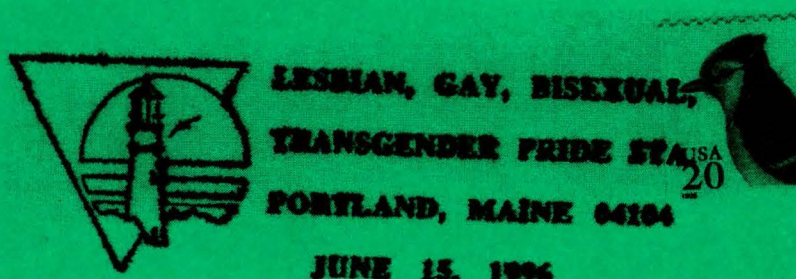
- Trans 101 with Jean Vermette and MeGRESS
- What Color are YOUR Genes with Michael Kernan of Vassar College
- Workshops on Men's, Women's and Transgender Health
- Concerns with Rosemary Prentice & Carol Millhouse of USM University Health Services
- Thrive, Not Just Survive with Pam Misenor of Dartmouth College
- New Student & Parent Orientation and Social Justice Issues: Do They Fit? With Kathi Bradford of Westfield State College
- Do's and Don'ts of Dealing with the Religious Right w/ Marc Adams, Todd Tuttle of HeartStrong, Inc.
- Bi Popular Demand: Exploring the B in GLBT with Marshall Miller & Dorian Solot
- Safe Zone Projects with Sarah Holmes & Mary Kay Kasper

Saturday/Sunday

- They're Just Words: Identity Language with Kellie Arbor
- Twice As Likely To Get A Date? Talking Bisexuality w/ Marshall Miller & Dorian Solot
- Pinch, Place and Unroll: Not Your Mother's Safe Sex Workshop with Marshall Miller & Dorian Solot
- Using Interactive Theatre to Produce Social Change with Braden Chapman
- So, Now I Have to do a Program on GLBTQA Issues!?! with Kathi Bradford of Westfield State College

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Full Frontal Exposure: Visibility, Anxiety, Solidarity, and Pride



In celebration of the donation of the Michael Rossetti Papers
to the Gay and Lesbian Archives,
Jean Byers Sampson Center for Diversity in Maine,
University of Southern Maine Library

Date: Friday, April 6, 2001

Where: Woodbury Student Center,
Portland Campus
University of Southern Maine

When: Reception 6-7 p.m.
Presentation 7-8:30 p.m.

Michael Rossetti is a founding member of Portland's Lesbian and Gay Pride Festival

► his papers document 14 years of involvement with the community celebrations

Sponsored by Jean Byers Sampson Center for Diversity, USM Library, USM GLBTQA Resources Program, 8th
Northeast Annual GLBTQA College Conference, Provost's Office

Community Bulletin Board

Thursday 3/8 - Aroostook County - Northern Lambda Nord's monthly meeting, 2nd Thursday each month at 6:30 pm at the GLBT Community Services Center of Northern Maine, 658 So. Main St., Caribou, (across the street from Nylander Museum). FMI ☎ 498-2088 or 800-468-2088. All interested persons are invited to attend.

Friday 3/9 - Vagina Monologues at Lewiston/Auburn UM Campus. FMI ☎ USM Women's Center.

Friday 3/16 - Jen Collins reads from her recently published short story, *Bedrock*, published by Alison Press in a book coming out this spring. Jen is a butch dyke freelance writer. Event is sponsored by Parkside Counseling and Southern Maine Femme Butch Group. For location ☎ 774-2403.

Friday 3/30 - *When Sex Comes to Church: An Interfaith Forum on offering Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Congregations* with guest Debra Haffner, former director of Siecus. 9-4 Woodfords Congregational Church, Portland. FMI ☎ Angie 797-6386.

Wed. 4/11 - Reception for UNE Medical Students For Choice, 7:30pm, UNE Art Gallery, Stevens Ave. Portland. FMI ☎ 780-1874.

Saturday 5/19 - Safe Schools Coalition meeting will be held in Augusta 10:30am-1:30pm. It will be a celebra-

tion and planning meeting. All who are interested are welcome. FMI e-mail to: megress@tds.net

Friday 4/6 - *Full Frontal Exposure: Visibility, Anxiety, Solidarity, and Pride*. Celebrating the donation of Michael Rossetti Papers (Pride celebrations in Portland). Cafe, Woodbury Student Center, 6-7pm Reception; 7-8:30pm Presentation. Free & open to public.

Thursday 4/12 - Aroostook County - Northern Lambda Nord's monthly meeting, the 2nd Thursday each month at 6:30 pm at the GLBT Community Services Center of Northern Maine, 658 So. Main St., Caribou, (across the street from the Nylander Museum) 498-2088 or 800-468-2088. All interested persons are invited to attend.

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Coastal Outright is a safe and confidential space for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and questioning young people, 15-22, who live in Knox, Lincoln, or Waldo counties. Social

support group meets on 2nd and 4th Friday evenings of the month. Movie nights, talk/hang out, plan trips, and learn about GLBTQ issues. Young people who would like more information or who would like to join: call (800) 207-4064 and ask for the Coastal Outright Coordinator or email coastaloutright@yahoo.com. Coastal Outright also utilizes adult advisors who may be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered. Adult volunteers attend meetings, provide transportation, offer support, and role model for Coastal Outright youth. Please call (800) 207-4064 for more info. A program of the Coastal AIDS Network, in Belfast, ME.

Outright/Lewiston-Auburn provides safe environments for GLBTQ young people. Drop-in for youth 22 & under every Friday from 6 to 8:30pm at our drop-in space, 145 Lisbon Street, Lewiston. **APEX**, a monthly drop-in group for young adults ages 20-26 is the 1st Monday of each month, from 6-8:30 pm, same location. FMI contact Penny Sargent by phone at 786-2717 or e-mail at outright_la@hotmail.com

Heart Circles for Gay/Bi/Questioning Men is a support/discussion group. Meetings are the 1st Wed. of each month in Norway and the 2nd & 4th Wed. of each month in Lewiston. For more info contact Sean Douglas by phone: 786-4697 or by e-mail at acla@gwi.net

I want Maine Rural Network to bring that message to all parts of Maine.

☐ I'd like to join a local social justice group. Please contact me.

Individual <input type="checkbox"/> \$20	Household <input type="checkbox"/> \$35	Activist <input type="checkbox"/> \$50	Organizer <input type="checkbox"/> \$100	Visionary <input type="checkbox"/> \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____
Name _____					
Street _____					
E-mail: _____					
Phone: day _____ evening: _____					
Town _____ State _____ Zip _____					

Your contribution for our educational efforts is tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to MRN..

Maine Rural Network 51 Shore Rd. Standish, ME 04084

Bumperstickers, Have We Got Bumperstickers!

Our National Health Plan – Don't Get Sick

Witches Parking – All Others Will Be Toad

Lord, help me to be the person my dog thinks I am

**Last Time We Mixed Politics With Religion...
People Got Burned At The Stake**

Queen Without a Country

And Many More...

\$2.50 each or 3 for \$6.00

Contact Naomi @ 642-2015 or Nomad@watchic.net



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