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Summer 2008

Equality News (Summer 2008)

Matthew R. Dubois

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EQUALITYNEWS

Working to secure full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in Maine through political action, education, and collaboration.

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EQME
EQUALITYMAINE

Summer 2008

**Community
Conversations
on Equality**

July 17 & July 21

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Discrimination Rears Ugly Head Again

by Betsy Smith, Executive Director & Darlene Huntress, Public Policy Director

NEWS UPDATE: This publication was on its way to the printers when we learned that the Christian Civic League canceled its referendum effort due to lack of support. While we're rejoicing that the immediate threat is over, this attack is just one in a long history of attacks against LGBT Mainers and our families. With an active debate on marriage taking place in Maine and across the nation, we know this is not the last attack. So what do we do? ...sit back and wait for the next attack or be pro-active in winning protections for LGBT families? Our next step is to organize an even greater presence at the polls on election day in November 2008. See back page for more information.

We were not able to edit the following article before press time.

Every nook and cranny of Maine has heard the news by now. Michael Heath of the Christian Civic League has begun collecting signatures for a referendum in November 2009 that would repeal every non-discrimination protection we have won for LGBT people in Maine. If the referendum were to pass, it would also end funding for the civil rights teams in Maine schools (which have been vital in combating harassment and violence of all kinds) and would prohibit unmarried couples from adopting jointly (which would threaten the best interest of children).

Most Mainers are inherently fair-minded, and our base of support has grown significantly since we passed, and voters upheld, the non-discrimination law over two years ago. But we aren't taking any chances on Heath's recent endeavor because this renewed attack on LGBT Mainers and their families would turn back the clock on civil rights, leaving thousands of individuals and families at risk.

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Volunteer Kathy Helming (L) spoke with Old Orchard Beach voters on June 10th. Over 300 OOB residents signed our pledge for equality to show support for their LGBT family members, friends, and neighbors.

EqualityMaine

Advocacy for the
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and
Transgender Communities since 1984

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Share Your Story At OurStoriesME.org

by Mary Phillips-Sandy, *Communications Coordinator*

Imagine what could happen if every person in Maine had a chance to sit down with a same-sex couple in a committed relationship—or a straight ally who supports a same-sex couple—and hear their story.

Not a political debate. Not a partisan argument. Just an honest, first-hand account of what it's like to be in a committed same-sex relationship in Maine.

As the recent anti-gay referendum proposal has shown, some folks in our state are still struggling with misperceptions and misunderstandings of same-sex relationships. Perhaps they've never gotten the opportunity to see what same-sex relationships are really about: families, friends, careers, spiritual communities, kids, pets, homes, hobbies... and the love and commitment that keeps any couple together.

This is why EqualityMaine and Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD) are creating a storybook called "Our Stories: Profiles of Same-Sex Couples in Maine." And that's why we need you to share your story at www.ourstoriesme.org.

Perhaps you're in a committed same-sex relationship. Or maybe you're a straight ally who has stood by friends in same-sex relationships. Maybe you're a parent, grandparent, sibling or relative who has a family member in a committed same-sex relationship. Perhaps you're a religious leader who feels called by your faith to support same-sex couples.

By sharing your story, you'll help make "Our Stories" a truly diverse portrait of relationships in Maine's LGBT community. Please visit www.ourstoriesme.org today to read an inspiring story from two women who have been committed to each other for over 25 years. You can also learn more about the project and, of course, share your own story.

You can make this project even more dynamic by spreading the word to your family and friends, and urging them to share their stories, too. We want to hear from Mainers from all walks of life, from each of the sixteen counties, in order to gather as many perspectives as possible—so please pass it on.

Questions about the "Our Stories" project? Feel free to email us at stories@ourstoriesme.org. •

David Cohan elected to Board of Directors

David Cohan was recently elected to the EqualityMaine Foundation Board of Directors. He comes to us with a plethora of experience in the non-profit, for-profit and public sectors.

Currently, David is the principal of PeaksCo LLC, a commercial real estate investment, development and consulting firm. Prior to that, he was Senior Investment Officer for CEI Capital Management LLC, an investment management subsidiary of the Maine-based non-profit Coastal Enterprises, Inc. David also served as City of Portland's Waterfront Asset and Development Manager for three years before joining CEI to help run its New Markets Tax Credit program.

David has a deep history of working with LGBT-focused organizations and served as past Chair of the Board of the Maine Speakout Project. He currently serves as Vice-Chair of the Board of the North American Friends of the Israel Oceanographic and Limnological Research Institute, as well as being involved in a number of other local community-based efforts. •



Good Day for Equality—Bad Day for Paul Madore

by Matthew Moonen, Field Organizer

Primaries Day was a big success for EqualityMaine. While many of our volunteers were at polling places from Sanford to Bar Harbor, talking with and gathering signatures from pro-equality voters, several more volunteers were in our office in Portland working to elect pro-equality candidates to the Maine State Legislature.

EqualityMaine had an interest in several competitive primary races. In many of the races both (or in some cases all three) of the candidates supported full equality, including marriage, for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Mainers. In those races, our job was easy—sit back and let the best pro-equality candidate win. In a few other races, however, we took an active role to give the pro-equality candidates the best chance of winning.

The most significant of these races was the Democratic primary in Lewiston's Senate District 16, where pro-equality Senator Peggy Rotundo is termed out. Two current state representatives with excellent voting records on LGBT issues, Reps. Margaret Craven and Elaine Makas, faced conservative activist Paul Madore.

Some of you may remember Paul Madore from Lewiston in 1993, leading a highly divisive effort to overturn a local ordinance that protected gay and lesbian residents from discrimination. Two years later, as he continued to rail against non-discrimination protections for LGBT Mainers, a spokesperson for Concerned Maine Families accurately described a group led by Madore as "engaging in politics motivated by the malevolent spirit of disgust and bigotry."

He was back again in 2005, this time with Michael Heath and pastor Sandy Williams from Freeport, waging a failed statewide attempt to repeal the recently passed non-discrimination law.



Paul Madore (L) of the Maine Grassroots Coalition, and Tim Russell and Michael Heath (R) from the Christian Civic League, attend a press conference the day after they lose the referendum campaign in November 2005. Madore ran as a Democrat in a primary Senate race in Lewiston this year, but the results weren't any better for him than they were in 2005.

There was widespread concern that in this primary race, Reps. Craven and Makas would split the progressive vote, allowing Madore to win (after four previous failed runs for the legislature) with barely 40 percent of the vote.

Because we could absolutely not let that happen, EqualityMaine jumped into the race. We mailed flyers, made phone calls, and wrote letters-to-the-editor of the *Lewiston Sun-Journal*, all in an effort to remind Democratic voters about Madore's long history of an almost singular focus on attacking LGBT people. In total we made 1,020 direct contacts with Lewiston voters in the days leading up to the primary, and reached many more through the newspaper.

In the end Madore finished a distant third behind Reps. Craven and Makas, respectively. We once again showed that supporting equality for LGBT Mainers is a winning position.

Congratulations to Rep. Margaret Craven and all of the victorious pro-equality candidates in competitive primaries:

- House: Echo Kaply-Smith, District 6
Adam Goode, District 15
Elsie Flemings, District 35
Henry Beck, District 76
Rep. Ed Finch, District 84
Jeff McCabe, District 85
Peter Stuckey, District 114
Diane Russell, District 120
- Senate: Rep. Larry Bliss, District 7
Justin Alford, District 8
Rep. Margaret Craven, District 16
Hon. Sharon Benoit, District 21
Diane Messer, District 23
Rep. Troy Jackson, District 35



Rep. Margaret Craven

EqualityMaine Foundation would like to thank Freedom to Marry for its recent \$10,000 grant in support of our work on the freedom to marry in Maine.

EqualityMaine at Maine Democratic State Convention

EqualityMaine hosted a reception at the 2008 Maine Democratic Party State Convention in Augusta. The reception was generously sponsored by Blackstones, Portland's oldest neighborhood gay bar and a long-time community supporter of LGBT issues and events. Also generously supporting the reception were Host Committee members:

Fay Brodell & Sue Davis
Matthew Dubois & David Harrington
Jamie Gibson & Marty Shaw
Jane Gilbert & Nancy Fritz
Shawn LaGrega & John Rand
Dick Moll & Wallace Pinfold
Rodney Mondor & Ray Dumont
Alan Stearns
Barb Wood
Ellis Woodward



The EqualityMaine reception on Friday evening of the Maine Democratic Party State Convention was quite the place to be around midnight. From left to right: Sallie Chandler (York County Commission, prominent member of NAACP-Portland Branch and loyal EqualityMaine volunteer), Rachel Talbot-Ross (president of NAACP-Portland Branch), Kate Knox (EqualityMaine lobbyist), Lori Gramlich (Democratic Party organizer and Portland School Committee member) and Betsy Smith (executive director of EqualityMaine).

EqualityMaine field organizer Matt Moonen (2nd from right) talks with Anita Talbot (prominent member of NAACP-Portland Branch), Woody Higgins (long-time supporter of EqualityMaine) and an unknown convention delegate.



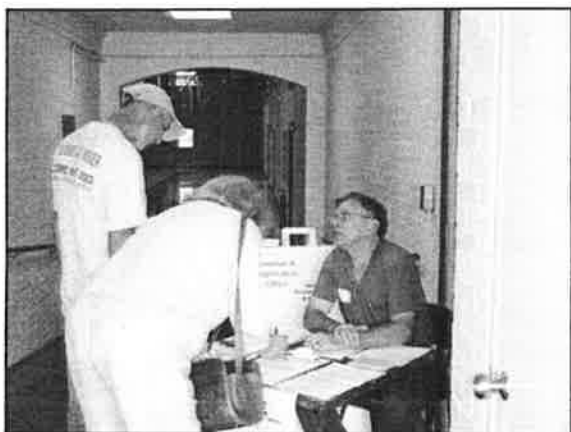
Echo Kaply-Smith (far right), candidate for House District #6, spent a year interning at EqualityMaine while she sought her Master's degree in Social Work. With her are (left to right): Brandon Maheu (regional field organizer for the 2005 Maine Won't Discriminate campaign), Brian Tweed (convention delegate) and Spencer Reed (guest at the convention).

Discrimination Rears Ugly Head Again

(continued from page 1)

EqualityMaine and our coalition partners jumped into action the moment we learned of Heath's referendum submission to the Secretary of State. Mary Bonauto from GLAD, Zach Heiden from MCLU, Pat Peard from Bernstein Shur and a handful of other lawyers provided mountains of legal information to the Secretary of State on the laws governing the citizen initiative process. As gatekeeper of that process, the Secretary of State must ensure that a citizen initiative follows appropriate drafting guidelines. In Heath's case, with the proposed referendum question being so misleading—what exactly does “eliminating special rights in Maine” mean?—it could be argued that he hardly followed any!

While the Secretary of State had ample legal justification for rejecting the initiative outright, Maine is deferential to the citizen initiative process and rejecting it was simply out of the question.



Volunteer Jim Bishop (right) from Bar Mills discusses the Heath referendum with a voter in Saco as his wife signs our pledge for equality.

So our next step was to ensure that appropriate drafting guidelines were adhered to. We learned during this process that the legislature recently passed a bill that changes how a citizen initiative is drafted. In the past, the actual referendum question appeared at the top of the petition that voters signed—for instance, “Do you support ...”. Now, the title of the actual bill that the initiative proposes be passed or amended appears at the top of the petition—for instance, “An Act to ...”

It is incumbent upon the Secretary of State to ensure that the title of the bill on a citizen initiative petition makes it clear to a voter what laws will be affected if the referendum were to be enacted.

Would a voter possibly know what laws would be affected by Mr. Heath's original wording?

“An Act to Protect Marriage and Promote Equality.”

We succeeded in significantly improving the wording so that voters will know what's at stake in the proposed referendum. This is the new title:

“An Act to Remove Protections Based on Sexual Orientation from the Maine Human Rights Act, Eliminate Funding for Civil Rights Teams in Public Schools, Prohibit Adoptions by Unmarried Couples, Add a Definition of Marriage, and Declare Civil Unions Unlawful.”

After hearing that Heath officially accepted the revision of his initiative, we moved to plan B in preventing this referendum from making it to the polls—influencing Heath's ability to collect 55,000 valid signatures.

While he has collected many signatures over the past decade, we have reasons to be optimistic that this time perhaps he'll fail:

- Our hard fought victories—protection from discrimination, funding for civil rights teams, and adoption—are part of the fabric of life in Maine. If voters know what protections will

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Forum on Trans Issues Provides Insight

by Darlene Huntress, Public Policy Director

In 2007, a number of bills were introduced in the Maine Legislature that would have specifically affected transgender people, including a bill proposed by one of the most anti-LGBT legislators in Maine, Rep. Brian Duprey (R-Hampden). While we were able to quietly kill the anti-trans bill (which would have made it a crime for a person to use a public bathroom designated for use by a gender different than the gender the person was assigned at birth), we realized we needed to plan a pro-active course for future, trans-positive legislation.

Recognizing the unique opportunity to forge a political community in Maine driven by trans-identified individuals, we began planning a statewide forum to identify and discuss both legislative and legal priorities for the future.

On May 6, 2008, EqualityMaine and Gay & Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) hosted a widely attended forum for Maine's transgender community at USM's Glickman Library. More than 30 trans-identified community members and activists gathered to brainstorm and help articulate priorities for affecting public policy on issues of concern to the transgender community in Maine.

EqualityMaine staff members Betsy Smith, Darlene Huntress and Matt Moonen, and GLAD staff members Jennifer Levi and Mary Bonauto listened as each participant discussed their personal concerns and highest priority issues as trans-identified people. From there, a broad list of categories were developed that included health care, education, safety, legal, law enforcement, employment, and resource and community support.

Thanks to the incredibly valuable and insightful information provided at the meeting, EqualityMaine and GLAD are much better equipped to begin a concerted, coordinated and informed campaign to change public policy on trans-related issues in Maine. We have a long road ahead of us, beginning with the hard work of educating legislators to the point where they not only understand trans issues, but feel it is in the best interest of the state of Maine to provide the necessary remedies to the various problems.

While we cannot promise success at every turn, we can promise that addressing trans issues in the legislature, to the best of our strategic ability, will be a priority for EqualityMaine.

Special thanks to Jean Vermette, Dorn MacMahon, Sarah Parker-Holmes, Suzie Bock from USM's Sampson Center, and the Center for Sexualities and Gender Diversity for their help in organizing this very successful forum. •

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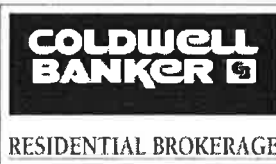
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Discrimination Rears Ugly Head Again

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be taken away from their families, friends and neighbors, we believe they'll hesitate before signing the petition.

- Heath's previous signature collection efforts came on the heels of a landmark victory for LGBT people—passage of the non-discrimination law. This time he has no 'bogeyman' to organize around. His supporters won't be naturally mobilized by a well publicized Maine victory for LGBT protections.

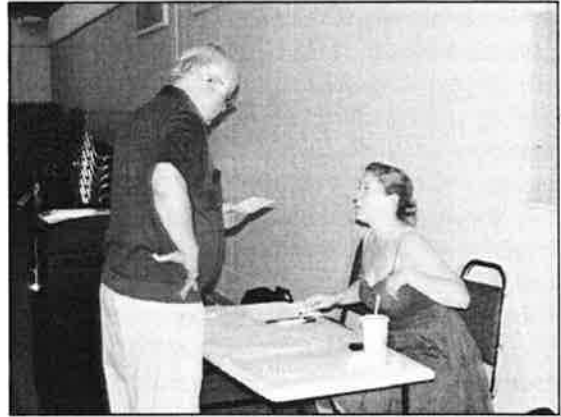
While he has until January 2009 to collect signatures—and will likely get a healthy portion of them through his network of churches—we believe that in order to reach 55,000 signatures, he had to collect a significant number of them on primary day (June 10) and again on general election day (Nov 4).

Primary Day: Our largest single-day action

Heath's goal for primary day was to collect 15,000 signatures. Knowing that primary day would be one of our best opportunities to tell voters about the worst, most sweeping attack on LGBT people in Maine's history, our goal for primary day was to minimize the number of signatures he collected and build our own list of supportive voters. We did this by sitting alongside of them with our 'Truth Squads,' telling voters the truth of what is at stake in this referendum and giving voters a choice—sign their *petition for discrimination* or our *pledge for equality*.



This was the scene in the "war room" on primary day, June 10th, as (L to R) Darlene Huntress (EqualityMaine Public Policy Director), Monique Hoeflinger (campaign consultant and longtime EqualityMaine supporter), and Matt Moonen (EqualityMaine Field Organizer) talk with volunteers at the polls to ensure our election day strategy is running smoothly.



Volunteer Chantal Nadeau (R) talks with a voter in Sanford about Heath's referendum as he reads the postcard we distributed that says, "Think Before You Sign" the Heath petition.

Regional polling captains from across the state began intense volunteer recruitment in early May—Kay Wilkins in Hancock County, Suzanne Kelley and Rev. Mark Doty in greater Bangor, Ray & Connie Winship in Kennebec County, Delene Perley in Windham, and Jim Bishop and Steve Ryan in Saco. Amy Mello from MassEquality helped us organize Sanford. Weekly statewide conference calls provided our regional captains with support and resources. Trainings in Bar Harbor, Bangor and Portland prepared volunteers to reach three critical goals—educate voters that the petition would strip basic legal protections from LGBT Mainers and their families; ask voters to support equality for LGBT people by signing our pledge for equality; and give voters a "Think Before You Sign the Heath Petition" postcard so that they could spread the word among family and friends.

By primary day, we had 125 volunteer shifts spread across eight counties. We were present at 35 polling places in 24 communities: Sanford, Wells, Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard Beach, Scarborough, Windham, Falmouth, Yarmouth, Freeport, West Bath, Rockport, Frankfort, Oakland, Fairfield, Skowhegan, Etna, Carmel, Hermon, Eddington, Old Town, Ellsworth, Sullivan, and Bar Harbor. EqualityMaine's field organizer Matt Moonen, public policy director Darlene Huntress, and Monique Hoeflinger (former staff member of National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and current campaign consultant) directed the statewide operation from EqualityMaine's conference room in Portland. By 9:00 pm most of the tallies were complete, and during our last statewide conference call, we were pleased to learn that we had identified and collected nearly 4,000 pro-equality signatures, our largest single-day action ever.

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LGBT Marketing Makes Smart Business Sense

by Brian Sandberg, Development Director

While the newspaper headlines have been dominated by Michael Heath's latest attempt to strip legal protections from LGBT Mainers and their families, there is another news story making the headlines about the LGBT community.

Rebecca Goldfine authored a story in MaineBiz (Maine's Business News Source) detailing EqualityMaine's efforts, along with Rainbow Business and Professional Association, GayMaine.org, and Greater Portland Convention and Visitors Bureau, to highlight the contributions of the LGBT community to Maine's economy.

Rebecca joined EqualityMaine at a luncheon in April where we welcomed Stephanie Blackwood, a gay and lesbian marketing specialist from New York City, and several key business supporters. The agenda at the luncheon: "What can the LGBT community do to help your business succeed and Maine's economy grow?"

As co-founder of Double Platinum, a full-service marketing communications agency that specializes in the gay and lesbian market, Stephanie was the right person to lead this discussion. Double Platinum's award-winning work has been with several Fortune 500 clients, including Allstate, IBM, ING, Lexus, Procter & Gamble, Pernod Ricard USA, Nationwide and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Stephanie detailed the compelling demographic data that drives companies to target the LGBT community, and laid out several key components to an effective LGBT marketing program.

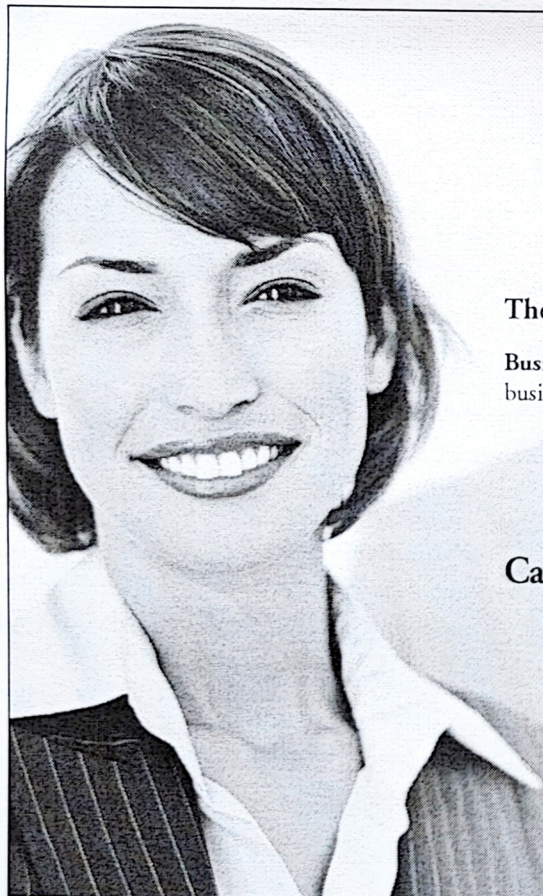
Goldfine had this to say about the luncheon:

"Last month, EqualityMaine hosted a talk in Portland by Stephanie Blackwood, co-founder of the New York City advertising firm Double Platinum, who spoke about gay and lesbian marketing and the demographics that have impressed national companies for years.

"The gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community sits on \$690 billion of spending power in the United States, Blackwood says, a number expected to grow to \$835 billion by 2011. [LGBT people] also graduate from college at a higher rate, and their median income of \$60,000 is higher than the general population's median income of \$57,000, according to her firm's research."

The full article is available at our website: www.equalitymaine.org.

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Elise Wilkinson (L) volunteered to talk with voters in Saco. Here she catches a voter in a hurry but was still able to give her one of our postcards encouraging people not to sign the Heath petition.

Being at the polls on primary day, we heard first-hand how Maine voters are simply not interested in leveling renewed attacks against their family members or neighbors. Thousands of people took the time to listen to us, ask questions, voice their support, give us their contact information, and encourage our work. It was a stunning effort, and our regional polling captains deserve the lion's share of credit for organizing an action that was nearly flawless.

What's Next?

Now we turn to election day, November 4th, where we will take advantage of this final opportunity to talk with voters about what's at stake in this referendum. With a large



Volunteer Amy Mello talked with voters in Sanford, where many voters signed our pledge for equality. Here a voter's daughter waits for her father to sign our pledge.

turnout expected, we intend to triple our primary day effort—a goal of identifying 10,000 supportive voters.

To reach our goal of 10,000 voters, we will divide the state into seven regions and will cover 122 polling places. We will need 7 regional coordinators, 9 Early Voting Captains, 100 Poll Captains and 600 Volunteer Shifts.

This will mark the largest single-day effort in our history, and while we believe it is well within our reach, it will take many volunteers from across the state to pull it off. So please make a commitment to equality today, by offering to volunteer on election day in November.

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, November 4th, and join us for what will be one of the most exciting election day efforts ever. Volunteer shifts will be available throughout the day, from 7 am to 8 pm, in every county.



Imani Nissanka volunteered to talk with voters in Biddeford. After refusing to sign every petition at the polls this particular voter, in response to Imani's invitation to sign our pledge of equality against the Heath referendum, said "Yes, that is one I will definitely sign."

We are motivated by the belief that if we invest in the process *now*, we won't have to invest tenfold in a referendum campaign *later*. And if we do end up in a referendum campaign in 2009, we will have invested in building a pro-equality voter file—the key to winning at the polls.

To learn more about volunteering on November 4th, or to find out about other actions we have planned this summer, please contact Darlene Huntress at 207-761-3732 or dhuntress@equalitymaine.org. •



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When you become a Sustaining Partner, your monthly donation helps provide steady, reliable income for EqualityMaine to respond quickly and effectively to discrimination and move Maine towards full equality.

\$10 a month supports our campaign to generate 15,000 constituent-signed legislative postcards on full equality for LGBT families.

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\$25 a month supports our organizing of 78 in-district legislative meetings, where constituents talk one-on-one with their legislators about equality.

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Mail your pledge to EqualityMaine, PO Box 1951, Portland ME 04104 or fax to 207-761-3752. For more information or to join by phone, contact Brian Sandberg at (207) 761-3732 or brian@equalitymaine.org. Thanks for your Sustaining support!

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Members Host Elegant House Party

A group of EqualityMaine members proposed, planned, and hosted an elegant house party at a bed & breakfast in Freeport, as a way to raise money for EqualityMaine. Suzannah Pogue and Sandy Jones, who own Space at 7 Maple

bed & breakfast, and co-hosts Shannon Banks and LK Gagnon, treated their guests to a meal of fine wines and gourmet cuisine—all in the name of equality.



Hosting the most elegant house party to date in EqualityMaine history were (L to R): Shannon Banks, LK Gagnon, Sandy Jones and Suzannah Pogue. If you're interested in Suzannah and Sandy's B&B in Freeport, you'll find them at www.spaceat7maple.com.



In attendance and clearly enjoying the party are (L to R): Elizabeth Banwell, Cindy Greathouse and Linda Borth.

Leave a Legacy of Equality

When you make or update your will, consider including EqualityMaine Foundation in your planning. We'll carry on your commitment to LGBT equality for years to come.

For more information on making a bequest or other planned gift to EqualityMaine Foundation, contact Brian Sandberg at (207) 761-3732 or brian@equalitymaine.org.

If you've included EqualityMaine Foundation in your will, we'd like to know so we can say thanks.



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Touching The Hearts of Men Rowe Labor Day Gay Men's Retreat

August 29-September 1

This Rowe retreat offers a bridge to gay community, the opportunity to make new and true friends and for some, a safe space to explore coming out. One of the country's oldest gay men's gatherings, this retreat provides men who are gay, bisexual, or questioning a place of acceptance, learning, and joy.

Come enjoy early autumn in the lovely Berkshire mountains of western Massachusetts.

Rowe Camp & Conference Center,
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Lisa M. Rideout
Senior Vice President



LGBT Marketing Makes Smart Business Sense

(continued from page 8)

The juxtaposition between the discriminatory efforts of Heath to tear LGBT people down and the business-related efforts of a local coalition to market the value and worth of LGBT people, couldn't be more stark. On the one hand, Heath will expend significant resources and energy to make life more difficult and economically challenging for more than 52,000 LGBT people living in Maine.¹ On the other hand, you have a broad coalition of LGBT and allied organizations working to attract top employees to Maine; to ensure all Maine workers and entrepreneurs are appreciated, respected, and feel safe in their workplace; and to identify and attract precious LGBT tourism dollars.

Whether or not Heath makes it to the ballot box in 2009 with this shockingly broad attack on LGBT people, some damage has already been done. To the top talent in the LGBT community who may be looking for a new place to relocate with their time, talent, and dollars, or to the LGBT family looking for a place to spend their two weeks in July, Heath's efforts serve as giant STOP sign on the Maine Turnpike. He is saying loud and clear – "You are not welcome here. Maine doesn't need your talents, entrepreneurial ideas, or investment capital."

While Heath's referendum is an attempt to strip basic legal protections from LGBT Mainers, it's also an attack on Maine's economy. Anyone concerned with Maine's ability to attract and retain top talent, or to attract new tourism dollars, should be concerned about this latest attack on LGBT Mainers.

Creating and protecting a welcoming community is an important value for Mainers but, as more and more Maine employers are learning, it is also good business. Defeating Heath's referendum is not just a political, social, and moral issue, it is also an economic issue. We are moving toward a day when the Chamber of Commerce will be the first organization to stand up when the LGBT community is attacked. •

¹ It is estimated that 5.2% of Maine's adult population are lesbian, gay or bisexual. The Williams Institute, October 2006, Same-Sex Couples and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Populations: New Estimates from the American Community Survey, by Gary J. Gates, PhD.

Marjorie Love, M.S.W.

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RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR JOIN EQUALITYMAINE TODAY!

All EqualityMaine members receive our quarterly newsletter, regular communication through email regarding political action and upcoming events, opportunities to volunteer, and the reward of supporting LGBT advocacy efforts. Contributions of any amount are counted towards membership – whether you can give \$1 or \$1,000, your membership makes a difference in winning protections for LGBT people in Maine.

YES! I want to be a member of EqualityMaine! Enclosed is my contribution of:

☐ \$35 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$_____

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☐ Please charge this to my credit card. ☐ My check payable to EqualityMaine is enclosed.

☐ Sign me up as a Sustaining Partner (see page 11)! Please start charging my monthly gift of \$10 / \$15 / \$25 / \$_____

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EQUALITY MAINE

Community Conversations on Equality — July 17 & July 21

We can rejoice that the immediate threat of another anti-LGBT referendum is over, but as history has shown—time and time again—this is just one in a long history of attacks on LGBT Mainers. With an active debate on marriage taking place in Maine and across the nation, we know this is not the last attack.

So we find ourselves at a critical juncture: Do we sit back and wait until the next attack? Or do we build on the momentum we generated on primary day—and be pro-active in winning protections for our families?

With you, we can build a pro-active campaign for full equality. Our next step is to organize an even greater presence at the polls on election day in November 2008. On that day, we will have an extraordinary opportunity to continue the conversation about our lives and our families with Maine voters.

Come learn more about this work and our strategy to win protections for all Maine families at one of our upcoming **Community Conversations on Equality**. Mark your calendars now to attend one of these events, which promise to be engaging and motivating. •

Thursday, July 17, 6-8pm, Bangor, location TBA
Monday, July 21, 6-8pm, Portland, location TBA

Check out our website (www.equalitymaine.org) for details about location two weeks prior to the meetings.