Christian Civic League Pursues Anti-Gay-Rights Repeal

AUGUSTA, Maine (AP) The Christian Civic League of Maine decided to go ahead with its campaign to repeal a bill protecting homosexuals from certain forms of discrimination.

Michael Heath, the league’s executive director, said his group’s board of directors voted to endorse an effort to collect more than 51,000 signatures to block the bill from becoming law and force a referendum. Under a bill passed this spring by the Legislature and signed by Gov. Angus King last month, gays in Maine cannot be discriminated against in housing, public accommodations, credit or employment.

King met with Heath and other league leaders on June 6 to try to persuade them not to go forward with their repeal campaign. Only about a third to a half of the league’s 30 directors were present for the vote, but the result was unanimous, Heath said. “My sense of the board was that they’re very supportive of moving ahead,” Heath said. “They want to move ahead.”

Betsy Smith, president of the Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance, said she was “deeply disappointed” with the decision. “Maine has already made it clear that we do not want anti-gay discrimination to be legal,” Smith said, noting voters two years ago defeated a proposal that would have prevented cities from extending rights to gays.

Heath previously had said the league may wait until July 4 to make up its decision. That’s the deadline the organization set to get commitments from 1,000 volunteers willing to circulate petitions. However, since the board only meets every other month, it decided to endorse the campaign now, Heath said. Foes of the gay-rights bill will have 90 days after the Legislature officially adjourns next week to collect the necessary signatures. The league has about 4,000 members, including about 280 churches.
“All Politics Is Local” Study charts the Impact of Gay Rights at the Local Level

Washington, D.C. June 26, 1997 Gay rights legislation at the city and county level has advanced at a dramatic pace in the 1990’s, and has resulted in major differences in the lives of many gay people, say independent researchers at the University of Florida (UF), in a new report summarizing their book-length study of gay rights laws in the United States. One of the NGLTF, and authored by three University of Florida professors, Dr. Kenneth Wald, Dr. James Button, and Dr. Barbara Rienzo.

The University of Florida researchers intensively studied 126 American communities which had passed gay rights laws or policies as of 1993, and compared them to 125 randomly selected U.S. jurisdictions without such legislation. In addition, the authors did intensive field research in five representative communities to further examine the factors which led to the passage of the laws and to study their impact; the communities were Cincinnati, OH; Iowa City, IA; Philadelphia, PA; Raleigh, NC; and Santa Cruz, CA.

The book-length study on which the NGLTF Report is based is titled “Private Lives, Public Conflicts: Battles Over Gay Rights Legislation in American Communities.” It was published by Congressional Quarterly Press in February, 1997, and it provides one of the first scholarly examinations ever done of the politics, scope and impact of gay rights laws.

As one of the co-authors of the study, UF political scientist Dr. Kenneth Wald observed, “Although the headlines have been grabbed by national efforts to overturn anti-gay policies or pass gay rights laws, to a large degree the battle for legal protection of gay and lesbians has taken place in the local communities of America. Gay rights laws at the local level now cover one out of every five persons living in the United States.”

Factors helpful to the passage of local gay rights laws included: the level of political activation and mobilization of the local gay community, support for gay rights from straight allies, a population in the city that was racially diverse, younger, and religiously liberal. Another co-author of the NGLTF report, Dr. James Button comments, “These local ordinances signal a new stage in the political emergence of gays and lesbians. In a sense they mark the passing of the gay rights movement from the pursuit of cultural visibility to the enactment of legislative lawmakers.”

Despite progress in passing local gay rights laws, the Report’s authors note that backlash and hostility to gay people persists. They detail the arena of school-based non-discrimination policies as one in which opposition to gay rights remains volatile and charged. A carefully researched chapter in the book, and summarized in the NGLTF Report, evaluates school-based programs addressing sexual orientation. Observes co-author Dr. Barbara Rienzo, “The forces that affect passage of local gay rights laws also help secure programs addressing sexual orientation in schools. A politically active gay community is the key to securing educational reform and support services for gay, lesbian, and bisexual students.”

Other findings of the NGLTF Report and the book on which it is based include:

- The mobilization of the gay community in a locality is the single most important political determinant of the passage of a gay rights law.
- Seventy-nine of the 157 cities and counties that had gay rights ordinances by 1997 passed them in the 1990’s.
- Gay rights ordinances almost always cover public employment but vary widely in their coverage of private sector employment, housing, public accommodations, hotels and resort centers, and private business contracts with the city or counties.
- The vast majority of gay rights ordinances do not cover residential housing, religious organizations, credit agencies or banks, and often do not include public schools, universities or small businesses, thereby granting them de facto exemptions.
- A majority of the public officials surveyed by the authors noted that ordinances were important because they sent a clear message that discrimination was unlawful.
- The quality of life for gay and lesbian Americans varies significantly between jurisdictions with gay rights laws and those without, most notably regarding access to government programs and services and the responsiveness of public schools to the needs of gay and lesbian students, parents and children.

“This study significantly broadens our understanding of the importance of local gay rights laws. It confirms what gay activists have argued for years: we need a more active and politically organized gay rights movement at the local and state level,” concluded Urvashi Vaid, Director of NGLTF’s Policy Institute.

Copies of the study may be obtained by calling NGLTF Publications at (202) 332-6483 or by downloading the Report from the NGLTF website (www.ngltf.org). Book reviews may be ordered from Congressional Quarterly Press, Customer Service and Fulfillment, Department HWC1, 1414 23rd Street NW, Washington, DC 20037 (800) 638-1710.

NGLTF Tunes out change at Christian Coalition

Washington, DC June 13, 1997 Although the Christian Coalition has announced the selection of two new top headliners, members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community should be prepared for reruns of the same old show said the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

Donald Hodel, former Interior and Energy Department secretary in the Reagan Administration, has been named Christian Coalition President and Randy Tate, a former one-term member of Congress, has become the Coalition’s new executive director, replacing Ralph Reed.

Tate drew a perfect rating for his votes from the Christian Coalition while he was in office. He scored no points with gays in part because of his vote for the anti-gay Defense of Marriage Act and his refusal to support a measure to repeal the discharge of service members with HIV. “It’s a different cast of characters,” said Kerry Lobel, Task Force executive director, “but we expect him to join the same crowd. After all,” Lobel added, “Pat Robertson still holds the remote control.” “The Christian Coalition has used its platform to demonize the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community,” Lobel noted. “I urge Hodel and Tate to turn away from their anti-gay record and come out with a new message. It would certainly help their ratings with millions of Americans who have tuned them out,” added Lobel.

Family asks U.S. Supreme Court to rule against Gay Foster Parenting

BOSTON (AP) A Belmont man claims his right to religious freedom was violated when the state placed his son in the care of gay foster parents. The man, who is not named in court papers, claims the state’s Department of Social Service violated his family’s deeply-held Catholic beliefs when it placed their 14-year-old son with two gay men for six months last year.

He has taken his claim to the U.S. Supreme Court. “The petitioner’s fundamental Catholic religious beliefs, which constitute a moral family unit are completely incongruous and incompatible with this foster placement,” the petition states. But others say the case has no merit and would certainly be rejected by the Court. “If you have parents able to second-guess decisions by the state about who is a fit foster parent based on their religious preferences, the entire system is unworkable,” said Mary Banoauto, the civil rights director for Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, a New England legal defense organization.

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American Legion Harassment at Southern Maine Pride

This is the scoop on the American Legion harassment at Portland’s Pride Parade on June 21. I'm sorry for the length of this post, but this is personally very important to many people who participated in Pride - Portland.

The Findings

Although there was cordial joking and shared smiles, we have several serious incidents of VERY hostile insults, even in a case where one Legislator was restrained from going after a marcher (unproven). Some people were indeed threatened by the Legionnaire actions. There were no incidents of physical contact of which Pride is aware.

AMLEG Responses so far:

- The only actually positive thing FROM THEM was a comment at the podium during a general assembly of the American Legion conference that they “will need to make some statement about today’s incident.” (assuming that’s positive). We’re taking that as a public admission of wrong doing and intent to apologize, regardless. They are clearly aware of the embarrassing nature of what went on.

What we’re doing and asking:

1) A public letter to the press citing the “appalling” (that’s the catch word) behavior of some legislators and specifically calling for meetings with g/l/b/t educators and the American Legion leadership in Maine (not likely). Holding off a bit on this one.

2) A private letter to the adjutant of the Maine American Legion below

3) Requesting members of our community, particularly those who saw or heard the Legislator, and especially any veterans (call your g/l/b/t positive veteran friends) to write the Adjutant and (kind of) repeat (in your own words) of the letter below. Please be very positive and take the high road. (No insults, threats or demands please). Who knows, maybe they’ll march in Bator Pride on July 12. If you’re from out of Maine, please write only if you’re a veteran or spend time here, as we want to keep the emphasis on local and constituency outrage.

4) We have here another excellent example, should any public discussions or meetings with the Legion (again, not likely) result in why sexual orientation needs to be included in the Maine Human Rights Act. THE LETTER: William Cicotti, Adjutant Department of Maine American Legion POBox 900 Waterville, Maine 04903-0900

Dear Sir,

Never in the eleven years of gay pride celebrations has anyone feared for their safety or been so verbally assaulted on the streets of Portland as from the Legislator at the Radisson Hotel Conference on June 21.

The Legislator’s cruel insults to parents who had lost children to AIDS, their threats to flag carrying veterans and their unprovoked ridicule of people in our parade leaves the Festival committee absolutely appalled.

Would American Legionaries harass the celebrants at la Kermesse or the Portland Greek Festival?

Would Legislator go to Federal street to intimidate the Italian community, particularly those who are HIV positive?

The leadership of the American Legion (again, not likely) result out of order.

Would any American Legion package come to be sincere, is a dialogue with the Legion (again, not likely) result out of order.

It is no more acceptable to do so to the gay community. Portland’s 1997 Pride Festival had over 4,000 people in the course of four days, both gay and non-gay Mainer, who came to dance, listen to concerts and celebrate being a cohesive and tolerant community. I can not emphasize to you enough just how much this incident of appalling bias is out of order. From no less than the podium of the Legion’s conference, a verbal promise was made to make some statement about today’s disgraceful incident.

In truth, the apology should be to the Legion by the offending member for behaving like street thugs while in uniform, but in over a week the American Legion has made no effort to do anything. What the Pride Committee is publicly calling for and truly expects if the Legion is to be sincere, is a dialogue with the Maine State American Legion leadership to start a process of understanding on behalf of their own gay and lesbian constituency.

Please feel free to call me when the Legion has considered our proposal so that we may begin to shed light together.

Thank you,

Michael Rossetti Executive Director Southern Maine Pride Festival.

We owe it to one another:

It would be really great to deluge Mr. Ciciotti with level headed, respectful but insistent letters (especially from veterans). The behavior of the Legislator’s CAN NOT be just excused or brushed off.

Thanks for your time and support. The SoMePride Committee apologizes for any hurt or insult that this has personally caused anyone. Please pass the word.
The comedian, Bob Smith. The atmosphere, jovial to say the least. Bob's reflective humor has a way of making one realize how very funny life really is and we all can learn to laugh in the face of adversity. From the moment he hit the stage the crowd was infected with side-cramping laughter as he joked about his alcoholic father, the state trooper who he described as more "OUI" than "AIR" and going so far as to joke about the days before during and after his father's funeral. I had the pleasure of talking to Bob Smith before his performance for Symposium XXIII, June 14th to see if there was a serious side to Bob and this is what I found.

So you are from Buffalo New York, I'm from Harlem, The Big City! New York is okay in small doses! But I live it here in Maine. Yeah. You know what I like about Maine is the trees. I live in Los Angeles now and it's a little colder and there are some parts that are nice but you have to be a millionaire, but here it seems "normal people" can live very well.

You are doing this benefit for the MLGPA, are you very political? I think I'm pretty good at that I've been an "out" performer since 1986 and I've worked in "straight comedy" clubs and I always talked about being gay and it did well. My way of being political is by doing political jokes in my act and also to give back to my community, like, I try to do a lot of benefits throughout the year some of which I get paid and others I don't, like I just did the PFLAG thing at the Metropolitan Community Church, you know, so I try to give as much as I can and not just take! Taking! 'Cause you don't want to be like that.

Do you think more gay performers are leaving the business that sort of thing now that they feel all the more free to be open? Because I'm sure there must be performers who are still, well, in the closet. You know, I think that the trend is for people to come "out" though, and "Ellen" I think is a great example of that because well you'll feel a lot better. Thirty years ago people in they're heads could like tell themselves "Well, you know, I can't" come out" blah, blah, blah. But now people feel guilty about not being out and you know, they should, because it's such a relief to come out and people don't realize that. I remember that some study came out that said that people who come "out" actually live longer lives because they no longer suffer the stress from being in the closet.

I know the serious side of Bob Smith always comes peppered with humor, which is a good thing. You will probably have a long life span. I hope so! Because it seems you let it all out... I think that humor is really a powerful thing, because I've performed in really... like in Orange County which in California is really Republican conservative counties and the Improve Comedy Club has had me there twice and most of the audience has "been there done that" sort of thing and they're sort of like "I'm surprised" and they don't say it but they get that look... and then you get other people say you know I've got a gay brother and you know, blah, blah but it's a great way to communicate with people I think.

I think your humor transcends Gay/ Straight lines because it's very identifiable in many "average family" ways. Well, I like to think my humor is from a Gay man's point of view and Bob's humor comes from a lesbian point of view, but it's a person up there, an individual. So I think it's about communicating so I don't sit down and say "I'm going to write a GAY joke! Ha! Ha! No, this is a GAY joke only gay people can get it!" Ha, jokes. "Give the Lesbians something!" Ha! Ha! While I laugh he continues. It doesn't work that way, you just come up with things you think are funny and hope, and you try them out and sometimes they work and sometimes they don't. Like the one you fogged up last night! Yeah, yeah. But, you owned up to it and the way you did was in and of itself funny. Well, you know, you get tongue tied and... I imagine you must, I couldn't possibly get up and talk in front of all these people, you must get nervous. Yeah, but really what I do and I have a new book coming out in the fall that I'm really happy about. Ok, what is it called? "Occasionally Bold" and it's essays from everything from going my father's funeral to Neti Garchik comparing being Gay to being an Alcoholic. A lot of family stuff, and about being in a relationship which I think gay men, Lesbians, straight people everyone is going to identify with. There are things on nature and I think people will like it, personally I think it's the best work I've ever done. Well I've spent two years working on the book.

In speaking with Bob Smith I found him to be irresponsibly funny and very sweet and kind, I truly hope he returns to Maine and leaves us all laughing again.

Urvashi Vaid

URVASHI VAID Urvasi Vaid the keynote speaker at Symposium XXIII Saturday morning June 14th was eloquent to say the least. As I walked from my car to the auditorium I could not help but notice only about thirty other cars in the parking lot, forty on the high side. Although I was unavoidably late I somehow expected to see more people show up for this, in any case. She spoke very effectively to little more than two and a half dozen people about the "system" and how it works, and how it doesn't work, as well as what sorts of things we can do to work the system. After her speech, I had the opportunity to ask her the following question.

And it: "If you had one piece of advice that you would give to any person who is not politically active or involved within the gay community, what would that be?"

Urvashi: "Well, you're challenging my fundamental assumption that to be gay is to be political. If you think that your life is safe, secure and the freedom that you enjoy is won forever, "think again." Look at the experience of other communities that have fought for civil rights. What's going on in our own community today, right here in Maine? We won a gay rights bill but immediately there's an effort to repeal it. It isn't over and we need you.

We need you to make whatever contribution you want to make. And that's the thing I'm thinking of, that's reading a book, that's being a $25.00-a-year member of the alliance here in Maine, there's a range of contributions that people can make. I ended my book with a series of very specific lists of things to do for people who are not political. I live in a very, very rarified world, I can be openly gay, and work in a gay context. Some people are never going to be interested in politics: culture interests them more, making a family and that's fine. But I do think it's about responsibility, every gay person has a responsibility to give something back to ensure the survival of gay people. It sounds old-fashioned to say this, but I really feel that our movement is built on volunteer energy: time and talent and ideas."
Maine's first Film Premiere in over 20 years was held at Keystone Theatre and Cafe on June 27, 1997. Keystone, owned and managed by Jim Flanagan, opened its doors to the public about six months ago.

The unique dinner theatre offers a variety of entertainment pleasure, from comfortable seating to a unique atmosphere, you can relax, have a meal, a snack, prepared by a cooking staff of six headed by Aliya Levine. Enjoy a variety of Portland's best microbrews, a glass of wine, or simply kick back and enjoy the movies.

The theatre is quite expansive, lending itself to the old style Silver Screen Theatres of times past, but with a very new feel. Classic film buffs can now see they're favorites the way they were meant to be seen, on a very large movie screen.

Enjoy Classic Film festivals such as Humphrey Bogart and Alfred Hitchcock, foreign films, comedy's and contemporary films like "The Quiet Room" coming in August.

I hope you come and check this place out, besides where else can you go and watch a really good flick for only five bucks?
**Das Barbecu: A Review**

Stage Company’s first go at producing a musical for the summer season. This comedic adaptation of Wagner’s Ring cycle Americanizes all the classic elements of the great composer’s operas: even the Valkyries put in an appearance. With cleverly written lyrics, snappy tunes and an intelligent — if not initially unintelligible plot — one needn’t be versed in the ways of Wagner to truly appreciate the elements of hubris rauously played out among the assorted characters.

A highly energetic cast of five plays an ensemble of over thirty roles, telling the story of fated lovers Siegfried and Brunhilde in a Texas the likes of which you’ve probably never dreamed. This sing-and-dance numbers like “Hog-Tie Your Man” and “Making Guacamole” elicit strong performances from all five actors, demonstrating an admirable adaptability to the demands of their respective, as well as collective, roles.

Nanci Little has won me over with a writing style that can best be described as “Lyrical” and description so detailed “visual” readers such as myself can not only see the scenes unfold but can almost smell the freshly churned butter and almost taste the baked biscuit. Although I had to read the first three pages more than once wondering if I had missed something, all became clear to me as I read on. I look forward to top reading more of Nanci’s work with great anticipation. In closing I recommend this book to all you “Hopeful Romantics”. Happy reading!

**K. D. Lang**

NEW YORK (AP) It was a long way from the cowboy bars of western Canada. Dressed in a sleek, pin-striped suit, k.d. lang was working a swanky party in her honor on Central Park South in Manhattan. Tuxedoed servers offered up caviar.

Madonnas sat at a table making small talk with lang stood under a spotlight holding a microphone, in front of her longtime piano player. She sang a half-hour’s worth of songs from her new album, “Drag,” moving from the romantic joy of “The Air That I Breathe” to the pain of “Last Cigarette.” She looked right at home, soaking up the big-city audience’s adoration.

Lang began her career fronting a turbo-charged band that shook up the country establishment and has evolved into one of her generation’s premiere torch singers. Along the way, she became an icon in the homosexual community for a “coming out” that prefigured the more publicized announcement of television star Ellen DeGeneres. Even before her announcement, lang was used to an intensely devoted group of fans. It’s both flattering and scary; lang would log on to the Internet and see a posting describing where she and her girlfriend ate dinner the previous night. “It started to make me feel neurotic so I just turned my computer off,” she said.

Her eyes still getting used to the morning light all right, it was near noon lang sat by the empty bar of a Manhattan hotel for an interview.

1. You reportedly were not happy with how your record company got behind your last album, “All I Can Eat.” “Do you think that’s why it didn’t do as well?” At such a question, lang’s eyes widened before she managed to reply. “Is it because it wasn’t your best work?” lang: That’s just artist bitterness, I think. You can’t win them all. I think it’s my best work in certain aspects but not my best in other aspects. Every record has its ups and downs. It was a really bad record for me personally, for personal transition reasons. It’s over now. It’s still a good record and I’m proud of it. It’s still there. People can still buy it.

2. How much work goes into keeping your voice in shape and improving your singing style? lang: It’s a 100 percent, lifestyle-encompassing process. It’s everything that I do. It’s being extremely disciplined. It’s being not-so-disciplined that you feel...
Millennium: The New Kids on the Block

That new place on India Street, it’s called Millennium and it opened Saturday June 21st. The owners Andrew Rogers, Bruce Wild and Derek Morris never imagined that the crowd would exceed the city fire codes in spite of it being a Saturday and Pride night at that.

For some the party started on the sidewalk waiting to get in, for others, it unfortunately ended there, but what can you expect on an opening night, on Pride night at a bar owned and operated by three wonderful gay men. With a crowd being a mark of success for any bar, it seems these guys are off to a runaway start.

Once inside, it’s nice to not be inundated with “Retro” music. You have your choice of several rooms to enjoy. There’s the bar and dance area, a spacious pool room and a lovely patio. The bartenders, Andrew Rogers, Shawn Walsh, Kelly Spaulding, Mia Violi, and Jerry Sherman you’ll find personable and friendly.

The owners are already planning for expansion which will include larger facilities for the ladies as well as a new bigger dance floor.

They bill their club as a “Futuristic” night club and not a “Gay” club and strive to be a place where everyone feels welcome. Their commitment to the community remains a high priority for these men, though, as they plan a variety of functions, benefits and fund-raisers, to benefit the community.

Their regular weekly schedule includes:

Wet’N’Wild Wednesdays “The Booze is Back” 9 pm to 1 am
Thursday Ladies Night with live bands and drink specials

Friday Happy hour 4-8 pm with a Free Buffet. Dance Club 9pm to 3am.
Saturday Dance Club 9 pm to 3 am
Sunday Beer Blast 3 - 7 pm

Millennium’s Upcoming Events:
July 9 - DJ Blue Soul - alternative dance music
July 10 - Mark Miller Blues Band - Ladies Night
July 11 - Happy Hour with Lacy & Moore - on the patio
July 12 - DJ Bruce Wild 9 - 3
July 13 - DJ Felix
July 16 - DJ Pete D

July 19 - DJ Lapee Love
July 24 - Jenny Woodman - Ladies Night
Aug 1 - Judjdjub - on the patio
Celebrates Pride 1997

Photo by Annette Dragon

Photo by Annette Dragon

Photo by Tom Antonik

Photo by Tom Antonik
Rant: "So whitebread, it's boring."

by David Cook

Casco Bay Weekly's June 12th issue carried a cover story called "Eleven Reasons for Pride in Portland's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered communities." Who would think to create a phenomenon like this? Who would find it interesting? Sex and sexuality weren't mentioned and the reader was left with the impression that gay was just another profession that was the effort falls flat to appeal to the blackest of stylus.

Meanwhile, just up the street from CBW offices, the New Arts Cinema is not finding much to celebrate. The Fine Arts is not now more of a social club where a few loyal patrons go to meet and talk about the good old days.

Tom, a genteel man, sits in his cage at the front door, renting and selling videos and dispensing tickers to the rare visitor who decides to bother with the inner theater where the porno movies are shown. Tom keeps an eye on two video monitors which display the progress of the movies showing on the two sides of the theater. The audience is looking at the "main" side but Tom calls the "gray side" and the "straight side" but which Tom calls the "gray side and the gay side." Tom is also a smaller TV screen. This monitor, installed in the rear part of the theater to keep the city officials happy, allows theater personnel to spy on the patrons of either side and to intervene if any acts are observed of any hanky-panky going on. Signs warning that surveillance equipment is in use are prominently displayed inside the door that separates the theater area from the outer lobby. If, upon seeing the surveillance sign, the patron turns around immediately and comes back out into the lobby, he can get a refund of his ticket price. If he has already proceeded into the theater, he will have to discover that not only is he being watched, but that the theater is basically empty, it is too late to get a refund.

Video surveillance is only one "enhancement" to the theater's services put in place since the revocation of its license (it is currently operating during the appeal process). There is also a red notebook. Kept in a file drawer, ready to be used at a moment's notice, is a red tape recording bound into which the time, date, and physical description of any patron who has been kicked out is entered. Although the issue of whether the video surveillance system is not currently being recorded on tape, it doesn't take too much effort to sort through the contents of the red notebook, a tape of activities inside the theater, along with the contents of the red notebook, could be used by the police.

Tom says the surveillance activities constitute a "failure to meet" the Fine Arts to comply with a ruling which declared that activities in the theater constituted a "breach of the peace."

Whatever their intent, the result is that, had the police not been there, there would have been a breach of the peace. The Justice only involved "unwanted and unwelcomed touching" of a police officer's crotch. I ask Tom if he saw any irony in this. 

Tom replies, "Our ideas of crime seem to have been washed away." He also claims to know the other side of what is happening inside the Fine Arts. The Justice only claimed that the crime rate in Portland did not justify the amount of police resources possessed by the city. In fact, there was that night a unanimous feeling that Portland is an over-policed city with an over-used word seems hollow and bureaucratic claims to know anything about the "queers" frequently in the article that portrays us as just like straights. The fact is that, on a typical walk between Monument and Longfellow Square, the police can outnumber Metro buses so substantially that committing a crime would seem to be a much more reliable way to get from Point A to Point B than taking the bus."

"If, with reference to the theater's recent license revocation based on the charge that actions of patrons violate the peace of the theater," Tom says, "Our ideas of crime seem to have been washed away. Now, it's whatever "Tom says to himself as a major crime involving "unwanted and unwelcomed touching" of a police officer's crotch. I ask Tom if he saw any irony in this. I ask him if he knows anything of what is happening inside the Fine Arts. He says, "That's a good question."

Martin Swinger "Singing Out!"

Update: The AIDS Project

The Community Pride Reporter is printed on recycled paper using soy-based inks. This practice reflects our commitment to responsible use of our earth's resources.

Using recycled paper sometimes results in the paper having a toned down or grayish tinge. However, we feel this is a small price to pay as Community Pride Reporter does it's part to "color ME Green."

by Marjorie Love

If you read the local papers, you know that The AIDS Project is once again in transition, following the resignation of Steve Dillingham as Executive Director. I was asked to step in as Interim Director, and have been on board since the end of March.

Part of my role is to provide leadership to, and coordination of, The AIDS Project's Board. The primary role, and integrity of the agency's operations and services. I am pleased to report that the integration of this role goes on, uninterrupted.

Another part of my role has been to conduct a staff assessment of our current status and needs, based on my own observations and on conversations with The AIDS Project's staff. As a result, and with a number of clients, volunteers, colleague agencies, and funders. Discussion of that assessment has served as an opportunity for the organization to reach a common understanding of where it is and what it needs, so that we can move forward as an organization.

The architecture of the organization to be more formal, continuing to work toward a decision on what The AIDS Project's next E.D. A search committee, chaired by Mike Martin of TAP's board, and with membership from both board and staff, to carry out the search process (which will be facilitative). Interested candidates should send a resume by May 1st.

If you read the papers, you may also know that The AIDS Project has been named as an "inner" candidate, and a TAP employee will be represented by a union. I am pleased to report that this process stopped short of the election. What has resulted instead is a need for the usual commitment to open communication and constructive problem-solving, a commitment that informs our process as we move forward.

I served as The AIDS Project's Executive Director from 1990-1993 and return at a time when the difficulty of the work is on a whole new level. It is a great honor and a pleasure for me to spend time with people who are living with AIDS, and doing so under conditions that are far more serious than the AIDS epidemic, is viable in TAP's struggles as an organization. I return to an organization that is relatively small and has a long road ahead of it. I am proud to be here, among the fine women and men who are TAP's staff board, volunteers, and clients, and to stay on until TAP's new Executive Director is recruited and on board.
Statement on Promise Keepers

by Kerry Label, executive director, NLGTF

As Promise Keepers gathers in Washington this weekend, it is important that all people who care about social justice be aware of the true agenda behind their activities.

This is a movement that bills itself as a non-political opportunity for Christian men to live their lives by biblical values and to affirm their commitment to God and their families. In fact, however, Promise Keepers' outwardly wholesome appearance of male bonding and family responsibility is a cover for a strong anti-woman/male dominating message that invalidates the worth and dignity of women and of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people. Their pledge to strengthen families scapgoats women and gay people, blaming them for the collapse of family and community. Their pledge of "racial reconciliation" rings hollow without a commitment to overcoming institutional racism.

Promise Keeper founder Bill McCartney has gained national notoriety for his anti-gay rhetoric. McCartney has said that "homosexuality is a sin," and that "the Bible teaches that God is against homosexuality." Their pledge of "racial reconciliation" is anything but!

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Promise Keepers and its leadership are of grave concern to all who care about equality and social justice. The larger agenda behind Promise Keepers and its leaders is of grave concern to all who care about equality and social justice.

Letter to the Editor: Response to Last month's "Rant"

"Dear Mr. Cook,

In response to your article "A Line is Drawn in the 'Rants'" I would like to say a few words in defense of our States petitioning procedure. First off, you claim that the referendum option is now the "Government of Choice" for those who don't believe in our Representative Democracy. I would like to point out that our "Representative Democracy" is anything but! If you or anybody else out there think that our elected officials represent the overall interest of the taxpaying voter or the ultimate welfare of our state I strongly urge you to re-consider your view.

The passing of Maine's Gay/ Lesbian rights bill (Finally!) in the summer of 1997 was a milestone for all who care about equality and civil rights. The majority of voters, have to live with the results of this referendum. If we, as a community have equal rights by now? If not Free to take our case to the ballot box.

A line is drawn in the sand and we have to live with the consequences of our actions. It is disgraceful that a group of people who don't reproduce, yet want to be compared to people who do reproduce, and "a lifestyle doesn't entitle anyone to special rights." The Promise Keepers' literature itself reads, "homosexuality violates God's creative design for a husband and a wife and is a sin." Justice-seeking people will not stand by and let this bigotry go unchallenged.

If Promise Keepers has their way, they will lead us into the 21st century as a Christian nation of men dedicated to perpetuating racial and gender oppression and homophobia. No matter what they claim, their leaders have a highly political agenda that would turn back the clock. Our country must move into the future guided on the principles of religious and political pluralism, freedom, and equality.

For more information on Promise Keepers, please contact NLGTF Field Organizer Betsy Gressler at bgressler@ngltf.org. This message was issued by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Field Department.

The Community Pride Reporter is published during the first two business days of the month. All submissions must be in by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue.
Maine AIDS Alliance


Coastal Community AIDS Awareness Program: P.O. Box 491, Belfast, ME 04915-0491. Call 207-288-0636.


Maine AIDS/LifeLine: 120 Mechanic Street, Portland, ME 04102. Call 207-774-2180.

Medical Support

Medical Support provides a wide range of services from counseling and treatment education to counseling and HIV testing and counseling. Located in New London, ME. Call 207-778-2667, 207-778-7070, or 1-800-727-2667.

Free Family Therapy

The National Association of Social Workers, ME.

Chapter, Sexual Minority Issues Committee welcomes new social work members. Our purpose is to provide education, resources, and linkage to issues involving sexual minorities in Maine. FMI call 207-622-7592.

Hate Crimes & Bias Incidents:

We want people to call us if they have been victimized. Call the Civil Rights Section of the Maine Department of the Attorney General at 207-626-8844.

Citrizen Alliance for Gay and Lesbian Rights:

Can we help? Call us at 207-775-6544. Each month our group meets on the third Thursday at 7:30 pm at the Holiday Inn By the Bay, 88 Spring St. Portland. Free parking and accessible to the mobility-impaired. Call 207-781-4380.

The Rainbow Business & Professional Association

A state-wide, non-profit organization established to create a gay, lesbian, bi and transgender "chamber of commerce" for Maine. Meetings for networking with other gay professionals. Call 207-775-0785 or 207-775-1545 or e-mail willroy@mainelink.net.

Maine Speakout Project for Equal Rights Trains and deploying volunteers state-wide to speak with citizen groups in their towns and regions about their lives and the lives of others who are affected with HIV in Maine. For information on activities in your county. 207-879-0480 or write: MSOR, 123 Congress St., Ste. 1, Portland 04101. You need not be a speaker to work with Speakout!
OUTRIGHT
Bangor: Maine AIDS Network, 136 Union Street, Unitarian Universalist Church, Park St., behind City Hall in Bangor. (207) 947-8020. Monday-Thurs 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Fri 10 a.m.-5 p.m. First Wed of each month 4:30 p.m. Call for meeting location. Support group. Meets to discuss issues and for gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgender people. Call Meads, 207-947-8020 or write to P.O. Box 505, Brewer, ME 04412.

Worcester-Kennebunk: Meets every other Tuesday in Bangor or Lewiston (near Dunks Donuts). Call Sherry or Gary at 207-782-0792. Email: kmcarder@earthlink.net

Seafood: Meets every Sun. 5-7 p.m. (moving to Fri. Tonight, 6-8 p.m. From 7 to 9 p.m (support group) at the UU Church, 429 Ocean Ave, Biddeford, ME. FMI call St. Mauritius Center, 207-446-1013.

THE MAINE YOUTH PROJECT
Works to create safer communities and schools for youth affected or infected by HIV/AIDS. Works to ensure that youth affected or infected by HIV/AIDS have opportunities and resources to affect, be a part of the solution. Call 207-758-0570 for information on the region, subcommittees. There is a place for all people of all ages and backgrounds.

HIV Related Support Meetings

National Center for Lesbian Rights Youth Project: 1-800-248-NCLR.

Main 2 Man hotline-Providing HIV/AIDS information, research and referral for identity and emotional support services. 207-805-2200 or Maine 1-800-629-4181. Gay & Lesbian Paymaster of Maine: Staffed Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m.-9 p.m. 207-805-2200 or 1-800-629-4181.

Gay & Lesbian Paymaster of Maine: Staffed Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. 207-805-2200 or Maine 1-800-629-4181.


On the Move: For info., refer to the Gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgender youth. 207-283-2218.

Maine Boy's Chorus: staffed, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday. A group holding meetings every 2nd Tuesday, 7-9 p.m. 207-774-6877.

Jen: Staffed hourly 24/7. 207-774-6877.

Call for information and support group meetings in Portland, Lewiston, Brunswick.

DDK AIDS: For lesbian, gay, bi & questioning youth under 19 yrs. 207-784-2814.

Gay's Place: 207-784-2814.

In the mood: Call 207-798-6501 and ask for Jen, a support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender-variant youth. 207-784-2814.

Police: 207-784-2814.

Maine Gay Chorus: 603-679-4031.

Maine GayNet Home Page

Women In Harmony

acoustic choral ensemble open to all women regardless of age, race, religion, or sexual orientation. If you are interested in becoming a member or volunteering organizational skills, send ASE (including your phone number) to P.O. Box 316 Sta. A, Portland, ME 04101, or call 207-774-6877.

Maine Gay Chorus's community chorus which brings together all gay, lesbian, bisexual, & transgender people and their friends to create a musical entertainment. FMI call 774-204科 or write M.G.C.M., P.O. Box 10391, Portland, ME 04104.

The Maine Gay Visual Artist's League meets the third Wednesday of each month. The League is a non-profit, creative support network for Maine's gay & lesbian visual artists community. FMI call 775-3420.

National Hotline for gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgender youth. Youth Group. Staffed & trained, peer counselors. Lines are open Monday through Thursday 7-10 p.m., Friday and Saturday 7 a.m.-midnight. Confidential and anonymous. Call 1-800-347-3822.

HIV/AIDS Prevention Project: Staffed Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7 to 9 p.m. Call 207-498-0069.

The AIDS Line 1-800-851-AIDS (1-800-851-2437) is the nation's only toll-free, 24-hour information and support service for people affected or infected with HIV/AIDS. Nonjudgmental, confidential and free. FMI call 207-784-2814.

DIAL AIDS: For lesbian, gay, bi, & questioning youth under 19 yrs. 207-784-2814.

Ingram's Volunteers: Call 207-784-2814.


AIDS Project in Rockland: 207-276-2272.

AIDS Project in Brunswick: 207-725-7950.

AIDS Project in Augusta: 207-973-2038.

AIDS Project in Waterville: 207-784-2814.

AIDS Project in Lewiston: 207-784-2814.

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Please note that MLGPA Board Meetings are no longer held on Saturday afternoon. Meetings are now held the third Thursday of every month in Augusta. To attend, please call 207-737-8146.

The Gay Times Festival

Please note that the Gay Times Festival is held from Saturday through Monday. The festival will feature a range of recreational, outdoor and personal growth activities. Call now for information or to reserve your space.

MLGPA

What a Celebration!!!

August 16-18 Gay Pride

Boston Pride.

For information call 508-564-4535 or 508-790-8782.

July 26 MLGPA Board Summer Retreat. 10:00-4:00. Location TBA. Everyone welcome to share a short set too! Also hiking and biking in Acadia, stargazing from Cadillac Mountain, a dance DJ'd by Mark and Jas, volleyball, many sea kayaking times, some planned workshops and some time for us to all decide what we together want to talk about. Vendors are welcome but should contact us first so we are sure to have table space reserved. If you want to walk in without reservations, for some or for all, we'll be delighted to see you. If you want College of the Atlantic's fabulous food, College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor, a GLBT weekend retreat of 3 days and 2 nights. For information call MLGPA office at 1-800-55-MLGPA or 567-7312.


August 16-18 Gay Times Bar Harbor, a GLBT weekend retreat of workshops, speakers, and entertainment. College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor. For information call 244-4062. *No MLGPA monthly meeting this month.* We're taking the month off! Teague Morris P.O. Box 23 Dresden, ME 04342-0023 207-737-8146.

Gay & Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) Federation meeting, Knoxville, Tennessee. Excellent conference for Legislative information. For information call Tracey Conaty at 202-332-6483 ext. 3303.

July 12 Bangor Pride. Parade starts at 1 am. Festival from 12-3 pm. For information call 942-7681.


July 19 Cape Cod (Mass.) Gay Pride. For information call 508-564-4535 or 508-790-8782.

The Gay Times Festival will be held this August at College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor, August 16-18 (Saturday through Monday). Our keynote speakers will be Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, two founders of "Daughters of Bilitis" in the 1950's, writers, and now a couple for over 4 decades, and Diane Elze, longtime Maine activist before her departure to pursue graduate studies. Sunday evening's concert will be Sons and Lovers, a warm and wonderful New York City-based quintet. Other attractions will include a late Saturday evening coffeehouse with Martin Swinger, who says he is delighted to have Romanovsky & Phillips as his warm-up act! Bring a musical instrument or some friends and you're welcome to share a short set too! Also hiking and biking in Acadia, stargazing from Cadillac Mountain, a dance DJ'd by Mark and Jas, volleyball, many sea kayaking times, some planned workshops and some time for us to all decide what we together want to talk about. Vendors are welcome but should contact us first so we are sure to have table space reserved. If you want to walk in without reservations, for some or for all, we'll be delighted to see you. If you want College of the Atlantic's fabulous food, College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor, a GLBT weekend retreat of 3 days and 2 nights. For information call MLGPA office at 1-800-55-MLGPA or 567-7312.


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Classified Ads

Shared Living

Seeking QUET, responsible, non-smoking/non-drinking housemate to share Bethel farmhouse 15 miles from Sunday River. Garden space, woods/fields for walking/mountain biking/country skiing. Must LOVE CATS, dogs, extended family. $350 per month includes heat, utilities except telephone. 207-774-3629/207-824-2736.

Female Housemate Wanted: To share beautiful, large old Colonial school house on 1/2 acre on Busline in No. Deering, Portland with three women and cats. N/S chem-free home with W/D, parking, and garden. Seeking responsible, neat, respectful woman to join us September 1. Large bedroom, $350 includes all utilities. Call Jenn at 878-8184.

Travel/Vacation

LESBIAN PARADISE! 20 Charming rooms, 100 mountain acres, pool, hot tub, hiking/trail system, yummy breakfasts, peace and privacy. We’re your perfect vacation choice year round! Week-long and midweek discounts. HIGHLANDS INN, Box 1180P, Bethlehem, NH 03574, (603) 869-3578.


Help Wanted

Project Director: Maine Civil Liberties Union seeks person to direct civil rights education project. Familiarity with gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender communities necessary. Experience in organizing educational events helpful. Position is part-time for six months, starting immediately. Send letter and resume to: Search Committee, MCCLU, 223 Oxford St., Portland ME 04101.

Donation:$25.00 Ticket No.
1st Prize: 4 Day cruise for two from Miami to Key West, Florida, and Cozumel, Mexico, aboard Carnival Ship Ecstasy. Includes round trip air from Portland to Miami. Value: $1,600
2nd Prize: 3 nights/4 days for two in either Montreal or Quebec City. Value: $700
3rd Prize: $300 gift certificate from Stowe Travel Agency. Proceeds to Benefit Merrymeeting AIDS Support Services P.O. Box 57, Brunswick, ME 04011 Tel: (207) 725-4955 Only 350 tickets to be sold. Date of drawing to be announced.

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
Inclusive, non-homophobic, liberation-based
The Gospel of Jesus, The Christ, for all people

Northern Lights MCC of Augusta, ME
Circle of Hope MCC of Portland, ME
4:00 pm Sunday. Communion each week
2.5 miles from Cony circle on Rt. 201 FMI: Bill at 207.453.9750
Immanuel Baptist, 156 High Street
4:00 pm Saturday
FMI: 207.775-6684 ext #32

Interpreted for the hearing impaired.
Every person is welcomed! Please join us!