Falwell’s newspaper claims ‘Teletubbies’ character is gay

Roanoke, Virginia. (AP) The Rev. Jerry Falwell has suggested that Tinky Winky, the purple, purse-toting character on television’s popular “Teletubbies” children’s show, is gay.

A spokesman for Itsy Bitsy Entertainment Co., which licenses the Teletubbies in the United States, said the purse is actually Tinky Winky’s magic bag. “The fact that he carries a magic bag doesn’t make him gay,” Steve Rice said. “It’s a children’s show, folks. To think we would be putting sexual innuendo in a children’s show is kind of outlandish.”

The February edition of the National Liberty Journal (NLJ), edited and published by Falwell, contains an article warning parents that the rotund Teletubby with the triangular antenna may be a gay role model. To support its claim, the publication says Tinky Winky has the voice of a boy but carries a purse. “He is purple — the gay-pride color; and his antenna is shaped like a triangle — the gay-pride symbol.”

Falwell contends the “subtle depictions” are intentional and issued a statement Tuesday that said, “As a Christian I feel that role modeling the gay lifestyle is damaging to the moral lives of children.”

The British show aimed at toddlers began airing on U.S. public television stations last spring. The Teletubbies are portrayed by actors in oversized, brightly colored costumes. They all have television screens on their tummies. “Jerry Falwell’s paranoia about gay people has reached a new and ludicrous high water mark,” said HRC Communications Director David M. Smith. “As farcical as it might sound, Falwell’s latest ranting has serious consequences.

He continues to demean and insult gay people, which continues to foster a divisive environment in this country that sometimes leads to violence.”

Falwell justified his outing in his publication by claiming that Tinky Winky has the voice of a boy but carries a purse. “He is purple the gay-pride color; and his antenna is shaped like a triangle the gay-pride symbol.”

Falwell contends the “subtle depictions” are intentional and issued a statement Tuesday that said, “As a Christian I feel that role modeling the gay lifestyle is damaging to the moral lives of children.”

The Human Rights Campaign assures the parents of the world that your children will not become gay due to the subver- sive effects of the color purple, triangles, and magic bags,” said Smith. The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campus support and educates the public to ensure that lesbian and gay Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.

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Organizations Jointly Oppose Death Penalty

By Kevin Ivers
Falwell's Latest Anti-Gay Attack, Turmoil in Christian Coalition Leadership, Devastating Election Study Document the Urgent Change of GOP Direction (Washington) Twobrewing controversies today signaled the political deterioration of social conservatism in the national political stage, further heightening the urgent need for the Republican Party leadership to move away from the far right and its leaders.

"How much more embarrassment will it take for the Republican leadership to move away from these people?" said Richard Tafel, executive director of Log Cabin Republicans. "I have advice for all the Republican officials who we're shaking their heads when they read about this today.

How about you stop inviting Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson to speak at our conventions from now on?"

Reverend Jerry Falwell, among the main far right leaders counted by the Republican Party leadership for years, announced today that a character on the popular television show "Teletubbies" is "role-modeling the gay lifestyle." The character, called "Tinky Winky," is "purple - the gay-pride color; and his antenna is shaped like a triangle - the gay-pride symbol," according to the February issue of Falwell's National Liberty Journal.

The comments followed Falwell's statement last month that "the anti-Christ is alive today" and is "very likely a Jew." At the same time, Donald Hodel, president of the Christian Coalition, resigned in a bitter dispute with Pat Robertson, founder of the organization, over Robertson's "repeated blunders" on his "700 Club" television show and his about-face on the impeachment trial of President Clinton, according to the Washington Times.

In a front page story, the Times quoted a Republican source as saying that "Christian Coalition members were calling up and resigning." Robertson has now formally submitted his resignation to President and chairman of the organization after Hodel's departure.

Both controversies came on the same day the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate, a leading voter research organization, released its final report on the 1998 elections. Its analysis included a section on the effects of the nation's largest gay Republican organization, which is listed as "other." It showed that Republicans"...have not only won the war, but we've been able to shift the debate in a positive direction, a final and hopeless solution to our colleagues today to oppose the death penalty with a unified voice. We participate in a social movement that places faith in the possibility of change. Capital punishment, a final and hopeless solution to the social problem of violence, not only subverts the possibility of individual change but it also fails to solve the problem of violence.

"I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, recognize that classes of people become terrorized by violent acts against individuals. haar's a pathetic and ineffective solution that problem and offer at least one solution: criminal justice resources directed toward educating and deterring the domestic terrorism of bias crime."

Richard Haynes, Executive Director Current page
Far Right continues to self-destruct

"It was not only the defeat of more socially conservative candidates which showed that tendency might be out-of-touch with the electorate," the CSAE report concluded, "all candidates from the social conservative wing of the GOP in competitive statewide races lost, indicating that the advocacy based on hostility to government, on abortion and flag burning, for prayer in the schools and similar nostrums may not be able to provide the vote the ACU believes that the yord districts are already drawn to insure [GOP success]."

"The death penalty is wrong in all cases," Liberties Union opposes the death penalty and agreed that killing a homophobe will not kill homophobia."
Washington, D.C.—February 3, 1999—The Wyoming legislature today killed all prospects of enacting the state's first-ever hate crimes law. Wyoming was the scene of the brutal and highly publicized murder of Matthew Shepard last October.

The Wyoming legislature is still considering a measure to establish a governor's bias crimes task force. Activists in Wyoming oppose this measure, viewing it as an attempt to avoid substantive action on hate crimes.

"If not now, when?" stated National Gay and Lesbian Task Force executive director Kerry Lobel. "These statutes are not a panacea, but they are a crucial component in the battle to eradicate hate crimes.

We are extremely disappointed that legislators in Wyoming refused an opportunity to take real leadership on this issue. Our community will continue to press for an enforceable hate crimes law in Wyoming, and we will not settle for legislative smoke and mirrors," added Lobel.

The Wyoming Senate Judiciary Committee voted down two bills today. One bill (SF 84) would have established enhanced penalties for bias-motivated crimes committed because of the victim's race, religion, color, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry. Another measure (SF 91) would have established enhanced penalties for bias-motivated crimes committed because of an individual's "membership in a group."

Last week the full House voted against a bill similar to SF 84. According to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, hate crime bills have been introduced in at least fourteen states this year. In nine states (CO, ID, MT, MS, MO, NY, OK, WA, WV) bills have been introduced to add sexual orientation to existing hate crimes statutes. In addition to Wyoming, the Idaho and Montana bills were defeated. In three states (IN, NM, SC) the bills would establish first-time hate crimes laws in those states.

Wyoming Legislation Kills Hate Crimes Bills

Five new shows on view in Arts in the Capitol program

Augusta - Five new exhibits are now on view in the Maine Arts Commission's 'Arts in the Capitol' program. This program uses public spaces in government buildings to display Maine-related works of art.

"Recent Acquisitions from the University of Maine Museum of Art" can be seen at the Blaine House and the Maine Arts Commission offices through March 12. This is part of a series of exhibits that features the collections of Maine's most prominent museums.

This show includes works by national and international artists as well as Maine artists, such as: photographer Jonathan Bailey, of St. George; printmaker Siri Wethli, of Stonington; painter Ma Jo Keleshian, of Ellsworth; photographer and printmaker Alan J. Herman, of Brunswick.

"Inland Landscapes: Work by the Founding Members of the Downtown Gallery," an exhibit of landscapes in oil, acrylic, oil stick and wood, is on view in the Governor's State House Gallery through March 12. Exhibiting artists comprise the founding members of the Downtown Gallery, an artist collective in rural Washington. These are: Lorna Crichton, Priscilla Cross, Joan Freiman, Paula Green, Phyllis Jantzen, John Shaw, Leva Tatarky and Cynthia White.

Other exhibits on view as part of the Arts in the Capitol program are:

"Traditional Arts Masters and Apprentices" is at the Maine Arts Commission office, through March 12. This show features large-scale, black-and-white photographs by documentary photographer Jere DeWaters. These works, which have been used in numerous publications, showcase master artists working with their apprentices as part of the Maine Arts Commission's Traditional Arts program.

"Selections from Greenhut Gallery," an exhibition at the office of the Speaker of the House, is an ongoing, rotating show of works by some of Maine's most prominent artists.

"The Colors of Maine in Watercolor and Oil," featuring paintings by Augusta artist Bonnie Tucker, can be seen at the Ray Building Gallery at the Maine Arts Commission's Maine department of Environmental Protection, through March 8.

The "Arts in the Capitol" program is sponsored by the Maine Arts Commission in conjunction with Governor Angus S. King Jr. and First Lady Mary J. Herman. Exhibits are open during regular business hours, and admission is free. For more information, call 287-2724.

Maine Arts Commission seeks artist input

New program will focus on helping Maine's independent artists develop and prosper

Augusta: Maine's artists will soon have a professional development program designed by and for them. The Maine Arts Commission is now surveying individual artists in all disciplines throughout the state to get their opinions on what such a program should include.

"Our overall goal is to create a comprehensive program of technical assistance and professional development opportunities for Maine artists at all levels of their development," says Alden C. Wilson, director of the Maine Arts Commission.

Kathy Ann Jones, the commission's Contemporary Arts associate, envisions a program that will help artists with their careers and livelihoods.

"We've heard over and over again from artists that they need more information, more opportunities, more chances to get together and also assistance with marketing and advocacy," Jones says. Those are the categories in the survey that was mailed to nearly 7,000 Maine artists earlier this month and is available to any Maine artist just for the asking.

Paul Doiron, executive director of the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance, in Brunswick, is chairman of the Maine Arts Commission task force that is implementing this project. He's hopeful that artists will give some thought to filling out the survey and returning it so that it will become part of an information bank that will be used to develop the new program.

"We really don't know what the end product is going to be here," he adds. "We've tried not to craft survey in such a way to serve as justification for programs we've already developed in our minds."

Artists have long been able to take part in a wide range of offerings by the Maine Arts Commission, but all of these were designed for another purpose, not to promote individual artists.

"This will be the first time that the Maine Arts Commission has made a commitment to tie all the pieces together and have a comprehensive program specifically for individual artists," Jones says.

Wilson hopes the new program will mirror the developmental goals of two of the commission's most successful programs, Arts in Education and Community Arts, and serves as a comprehensive program of technical assistance and building an infrastructure for the arts. By going directly to artists to survey their needs, this program will too, he adds. Like Wilson and Jones, Doiron sees this new commitment to individual artists as being built upon programs the commission already offers such as Percent for Art, the Individual Artists' Fellowship and Traditional Arts Apprenticeship programs and the Artists' Residency and Registry, fellowships and mentoring programs.

"We're looking at taking these programs and putting them under an umbrella of services to individual artists and augmenting them with new offerings developed out of responses to the survey," for this to happen, Doiron says, individual artists need to make their voices heard. "Every Maine artist's input is needed and wanted," he says. To make it easy, the commission is paying return postage on the surveys.

Once the surveys have been returned, an independent consultant will tabulate them, interpret the results and outline the kinds of projects and programs the commission might offer. An interim report will be presented at a statewide artists gathering in late March.

When our work begins," Doiron says, "We have to find a way to turn the ideas into real programs."

The task force is committed to presenting the final program to the commissioners on June 11, "Maine Artist's Day."

Any artist interested in having a copy of the survey can request one by calling the Maine Arts Commission, 287-2724 (e-mail: jan.poulin@state.me.us).
Michael Thomas Ford

I am a grown up. I know this because this morning for breakfast I ate half a bag of Reese's miniature peanut butter cups. If I were a child, someone would have probably stopped me or this was clearly an act of rebellion. I don't always feel like a grown up. In fact, most of the time I sit around waiting for someone to tell me what to do next, as if the bell ending recess rang but I can't remember where my classroom is. I keep hoping a hall monitor will happen along and point me in the right direction.

Some people take to the whole grown up thing with ease. They get jobs and plan for their futures. They have cocktails with friends, take vacations, pack shorts and write. But I still worry that "I'm 30," even though I know I am.

I think that I am sitting on the subway and look at them with their briefcases and stylish clothes, wondering how they got that way. Clearly we all started out on the same road. But at some point they took the exit leading to adulthood while I, apparently, was too busy trying to find a really good station on the radio and missed my turn.

It's not that I don't do the requisite adult things. I pay my bills every month. I carry a credit card, I have a car. But sometimes I still find myself sitting in front of the television set thinking, "You really should turn that off and go outside to play." And on more than one occasion without even reminding myself that no one is forcing me to get up at six every morning. But I do it anyway, urged on by some kind of groundless fear that if I continue to sleep someone is sure to give me hell for it.

When my parents were the age I can understand. They too turn 30. I'm sure they have all butter cups. And plan for their futures. They have real jobs. A really good station on the radio. And I wonder when everyone will succumb to some hideous form of biologic illness. When my parents were the age I can understand. They too turn 30. I'm sure they have all butter cups. And plan for their futures. They have real jobs. A really good station on the radio. And I wonder when everyone will succumb to some hideous form of biologic illness.

And I think that I am sitting in front of the mirror in the morning and wonder when everyone would figure out that underneath the suit and tie he wore to work he was really still 15 years old. Because that's what I do. Not that I own a suit or tie or have a real job. I sit at home in my boxers shorts and write. But I still worry that one day there will be a knock on the door and some official looking person will announce in a loud voice that the jig is up and I have to go back with the other kids.

When I was 12, I used to look at my sisters' college friends and think they were very grown-up. Then, when I was in college, I looked at people who had graduated and started their lives and thought that they were very grown-up.

A few years later, toiling in a real job, I started getting suspicions. The height of the adulthood bar kept rising, and it seemed as if I would never clear it.

Finally, I gave up. I admitted to myself that I am probably one of those truly grown-up people who knows what he's doing. And that's fine.

That's why the world has people like Dan Rather and Oprah. They figure it all out and break it to the rest of us in terms we can understand.

Thanks to them, I really don't need to be able to talk about health plans and politics with any sense of assurance. I can just sit around playing with blocks until Oprah and Dan fill me in.

A couple of months back I spoke to a group of third graders at a local elementary school about what it's like being a writer. During the question-and-answer period, I looked around at all the shiny little faces staring at me. Choosing one, I asked an eager little girl what she wanted to know.

"How old are you?" she asked.

"I'm 30," I answered, having just endured that birthday. All around me, eyes went wide. The children stared as if I were a newly-discovered relic pulled from the desert sands of Arizona or something. "That's so old," said one boy. "You're older than my mom," added another, disbelieving.

Things went on in this way for some time. The children wanted to know how someone as clearly aged as I was could write books, let alone walk to their school without the aid of a cane.

When I left that day, the teacher accompanied me to the doors of the school. "You should never tell them how old you are," she said. "It is like throwing raw meat to coyotes. I just tell them I know God when he was a boy. That shuts them up. Except for the ones who want to know whether or not he was a good kickball player."

But I know how those kids feel. They look at me and wonder what their lives will be like a billion years later when they too turn 30. I'm sure they have all kinds of plans about being models and football stars, of having nice clothes and nice cars and big houses. Next time I'll tell them the truth. "You still won't know what you want to be when you grow up," I'll say.

"You'll wonder why everyone else has great jobs and wonderful relationships and dogs who like to sleep on the floor, because probably you haven't won that Oscar yet and your significant other really isn't that good in bed and your dog likes to throw up on your shoes.

You might look out and make a lot of money, but chances are you'll be eating spaghetti and shopping at Wal-Mart while you try to pay off student loans and those credit card bills you rang up when you were 23 and thought it would all take care of itself."

Probably they will just stare at me for a few moments, wondering if I've succumbed to some hideous form of mental illness brought on by my advanced age. And then I'll feel bad for ruining their lives.

"Okay," I'll tell them gently. "It's not all that bad. The good news is, you can eat peanut butter cups for breakfast."

That should give anyone hope.

Michael Thomas Ford is the author of the books (Alec Baldwin Doesn't Love Me) and the forthcoming (That's Mr. Fagget to You). He welcomes e-mail at shopgirl@aol.com.

Organizations Jointly Oppose Death Penalty

continued from page 2

Director of the New York City Gay & Lesbian Anti-Violence Project said: "AVP unconditionally opposes the death penalty. As a victim services agency dealing with the physical and psychological aftermath of hatred against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and HIV-positive community - our community - AVP understands full well the threat of vengeance that heinous crimes often engender in the victim, the perpetrator's friends and family, and the community at-large.

However, as a human rights organization, struggling for justice for our people, AVP also views capital punishment as an act of state-sanctioned violence - an act that is no more or less violent than the barbaric acts of our attackers - and we unequivocally condemn it in every form, regardless of the perpetrator.

For additional information, resolutions and/or position papers from each of the organizations regarding the death penalty, contact:

Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation: Katherine Acey (212) 529-8021
Gay Men of African Descent Kevin McGruder (212) 414-9344
Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund Peggy Byson (212) 899-8785
Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center of New York Dan Willson (212) 620-7310
Lesbian & Gay Rights Project-ACLU Matt Coles (212) 549-2627
LLEGLO-National Latino/a LGTB Organization M. Oramas-Quintino (212) 466-8240

Community Pride Reporter is looking for dedicated individuals in the Portland/Augusta and Bangor areas to help distribute the newspaper... For only one hour of your time, you could help everyone enjoy CPR in your area!

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Community Pride Resources

Youth Support
Outright/Lewiston-Auburn has drop-in sessions for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth age 22 and under. We meet the first and third Friday evening of each month. For more information call 786-2717 or write Outright/ Lewiston-Auburn P.O. Box 7738, Lewiston, ME 04243-7738.

Meetings and support for gay, lesbian, bisexual and questioning youth. Help is needed to create a safe supportive environment for youth. Meetings in Camden area, Call 338-6330 for details

Maine Gender Resource and Support Service. Education, information, referrals for Maine's crossdressing and transgender community. P.O. Box 1894, Bangor, ME 04402-1894, phone: 207-862-2063. Email: megres@haintel.tds.net.

TRANNSUPPORT. Non-sexual, peer support for Maine's crossdressers and transsexuals and their SOs. Yearly dues. P.O. Box 17622, Portland, ME 04112. Phone: 207-862-2063. AIDS Support

For information on "Harm Reduction Workshop For Gay/Bi Men" or any other Mr. programs or services, call 338-6330 or write: Men's Resources. P.O. Box 956, Belfast, ME 04915

Support groups, education, and counseling for gay/bi men at risk of HIV infection to stay safe. Potluck/discussion group 4th Friday of each month at 7 p.m. Support group 1st and 3rd Monday of each month 156 High St., Belfast 7-9 p.m. Support group in Waldoboro area 2nd and 4th, Tuesday each month 7-9 p.m. Call 338-6330 for details.

HIV/AIDS Drop-in Support Group
HIV/AIDS drop-in support group for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Every Thursday 6:15 - 7:45 in Rockland. For location call Marjorie at the Coastal AIDS Network at 338-6330.

Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network works nation-wide to end homophobia in schools. All people who share this philosophy, regardless of sexual orientation or occupation, are welcome to attend meetings of the Southern Maine chapter of GLSEN.

Meetings are held the fourth Monday of most months, with exceptions possible for school holidays.

GLSEN-Southern Maine meets from 6:30 to 8:30 at Deering High School, 379 Stevens Ave., Portland. Non-members welcome. For more information, call Janis at 207-998-5252 or write to P.O.Box 10334, Portland, ME 04104.

Gay, lesbian & Straight Education Network, Downeast Maine Chapter meets the first Sunday of each month at 2 P.M. at the Downeast AIDS Network, 114 State Street, Ellsworth. (In case of major holidays on that date the meeting may be rescheduled.) All who support the goal of schools becoming safe for all students and teachers are welcome, whether they are teachers or not.

We are a good mix of men and women, gay and straight, teachers and others. We do teacher training and public education; and together with Downeast AIDS Network we are forming a chapter of Outright for young people. We coordinate our educational efforts with PFLAG and the Maine SpeakOut Project. For more information call Karen at 359 2347 or write to PO Box 373, Ellsworth ME 04605.

Body & Soul
The Gentle Wind Project is a non-profit world healing organization with a unique healing technology.

Based on understanding human beings in terms of our electromagnetic structures, the Gentle Wind Project's healing instruments repair and restore a person's energy field from the damaging effects of personal tragedy and negative life experiences: alleviating anxiety, depression, and stress-related conditions.

Use of the healing instruments is always free. Call for the name of someone near you. Our researchers offer Introductory, Advanced, and Relationship Seminars for a minimum of 20-25 people with specific person per donations. For more information call: (207)374-2184 seminarg@aol.com http://www.gentlewindproject.org

Gay-O.K!!

Of Greater Farmington is an informal social and discussion group for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Questioning (LGBTQ) individuals from the Farmington community and beyond. Meet once a month. Newcomers and old friends, each Thursday night from 7:30 until 9:00PM in the semi-private room in the rear of the Psychology Building of the U Maine at Farmington campus (62 High Street). Please call Brian at 778-7379 FMI.

Sister Space
A lesbian discussion group, meets on Monday evenings and topics will vary based on group interest.

This group is open to all Lesbians and will be held at the Unitarian Church on School St in Saco. School St intersects Main St. half way downtown. The cost for the group will be $2.00 to defray the cost of the room.

For time and other information contact Bobbi at 467-9166 or email nrm2@home.net.

February 1999 Community Pride Reporter Page 5

Beethoven, Brahms, Bernstein and the Boys

The Maine Gay Men's Chorus presents Beethoven, Brahms, Bernstein and the Boys. Guest Conductor Delmar Dustin Small. With special guest, noted soloist Meryl C. S. Troop. A portion of the proceeds will benefit AIDS Project of Litchfield, Me. He

We have kicked off our 7th year as a Chorus. The only Gay men's chorus in Maine. We have kicked off our campaign for Gala 2000 in San Jose, California in July of 2000. This is a world wide Gala Celebration of gay choruses.

Only 48 Male choruses are accepted by application, and we are one of them!!!! Watch for many upcoming events to help benefit our endeavor to Gala 2000!!!

We also have started something new this year called our Community Partnership Program in which we invite local community agencies to participate. We donate a portion of the concert proceeds to these organizations, as well as give them space at our concerts to show what their agency is about and add to their mailing lists and are recognized from the stage. Our first Partner was the AIDS PROJECT.

This concert session is OUTRIGHT Portland. Our PRIDE concert in June, we will participate with the Southern Maine Pride committee.

We will also be performing in Waterville, at Colby College on Sunday, March 21, 1999 at 8:00 at the chapel on campus, sponsored by Out of the Closet GSPRING. We are also performing in Gardiner in April with Martin Swinger at Johnson Hall. This will be taped for later broadcast by MPBN.

Delmar Dustin Small is our guest conductor for this concert as well as for Pride. He is a native of Litchfield, Me. He was the accompanist for the chorus at its inception and held that post for many seasons. He studied and graduated from Bates College in 1983 where he studied Organ and German.

He is currently accompanist of the Androscoggin Chorale, conductor of Lower octave, the young men's choir of The Boy Singers of Maine, and musical director of Onstage: The Best of Broadway, a benefit for the Children's Miracle Network.

Delmar provides artists with vocal coaching, arrangements, orchestrations, and music publishing services through his business WindMill Music, and is a member of the International Melodinological Society.

If you should need any further information, please feel free to contact me at 871-6496 or e-mail NADEAD@MAIL.MMC.ORG. or Mark McDonald, President of the Board of Directors, at 770-6777 or by email USUNH7BL@IBMMAIL.COM.

We are always looking for new members, so if any Gay or Gay Sensitive Male is interested in singing with the chorus, auditions will be held in early April for our upcoming Pride Concert. Watch for dates and locations in your local newspapers and on the Maine Online Page...WWW.MAINE.COM / MGMC?
Maine's Country Music Pioneer Show celebrates its 14th anniversary

by Evelyn A. Potter

The Maine Country Music Pioneer show celebrates its 14th anniversary this year at Cony High School, Augusta, on Sunday, March 7th starting at 1:00 p.m.

WPOR, 101.9, Portland, Real Country, Rockland and Norridgoin Production, Sidney sponsor the show. Some of the Pioneers who encouraged Poulin and appeared on the first show will be on hand to celebrate this anniversary.

They include the Gene Hooper Family, Tim "Lucky" Farrell and his famous fiddle and Ira Allen who returned to his native Maine from Nashville to perform. Other Maine Country Music greats who will share the stage are: Danny Harper, Fred "Tommy" Thompson, Kim and Jessi Maine. Her tours throughout the

Maine Country Music greats who will share the stage are: big name bands over WFAU, Augusta, as well as doing benefits and visiting hotels and rest homes throughout the state of Maine. Her tours throughout the state of Maine. "I have seen them with it seemed there were too many to mention, but her book contains personal memories and pictures of Al Hawkes, Yodelin' Slim Clark, as well as the late Maine greats, Rusty Wellington, Tony and Juanita, Dick Carver, Lonnie Lane, and Curly Brien.

Maine's Country Music Pioneer show celebrates its 14th anniversary. That extends the idea of judgment beyond the home and arena of life and death.

By Susan Raffe

This way of looking at the world consists of a system in which the more powerful have the legal framework that backs them when they seek retribution over those less powerful.

As gitl individual who experience discrimination because the legal system does not recognize our lives, we can not use that same system. If I am looking for protection and arrest, often exist in this land of gut emotion and belief.

But, that makes their debates so passionate and uncompromising. Understanding this, I want to do more than just react when I hear that the Log Cabin Republ.

At face value, I don't believe that gitl political organizing and advocating the death penalty can mix. We know that those who receive the death penalty are disproportionately poor of color and people who live in poverty and that the race and class of both perpetrators and victims count as much in a trial as does justice.

We know that if you commit a crime in one state, you are more likely to re.

(Continued on page 22 and see story on page 16 for the death penalty.)
Ron Adams moves in with PTC as The Nerd

(Bangor) - From March 10-21, Penobscot Theatre Company will present Larry Shue's modern comedy The Nerd at the Opera House in downtown Bangor. In the same vein as Shue's previous hit The Foreigner, this comedy is full of physical humor, sight gags and contemporary wit set in the 1980's.

The story follows around the reunion of a young architect with the man who saved his life in Vietnam a man he has never met. This, however, turns out to be a hopeless "nerd" a bumbling goof with no social grace, little intelligence, and less tact, who outstays his welcome with a vengeance.

Director Collene Frashure (Bangor) explained that "with the help of his loony friends, the desperate architect schemes up what he thinks are some crazy plans, but the unlikely guest the nerd is pretty crazy and contemporary wit set in the University of Maine."

Playing William Cubbert, host of this unwanted houseguest, is Andrew Lyons of Orono. Lyons was most recently seen in PTC's A Christmas Carol as Bob Cratchit. Cast in the roles of the mischief-making friends are Kim Shute (Idaho), who appeared in PTC's Hoddab Gabler, and Allen Adams (Orono), last seen in A Christmas Carol and Wait Until Dark. Shute is also a college intern in residence with Penobscot Theatre from the Moscow, Idaho campus of the University of Idaho.

Arriving at the most inopportune time are the stoic and stuffy Waldravges, played by Kent McCuskie (Bangor), Leslie K.A. Michaud (Ellsworth), and Nick Cyr (Bangor). Audiences will remember McCuskie's versatility in the multiple-roles of both Greater Tuna and A Tuna Christmas. Michaud was last on the PTC stage as the zany director Zorah Bloch in Inspecting Carol, as well as Maine Shakespeare Festival's The Merry Wives of Windsor. Cyr is also a familiar face from both A Christmas Carol and In A Grove: Four Japanese Ghost Stories.

"A Pay What You Wish" final dress rehearsal of The Nerd will be offered on Tuesday, March 9 at 7PM, and previews continue Wednesday and Thursday, March 10 and 11 at 7PM. Opening Night is Friday, March 12 at 8PM and includes a catered reception with cast and crew. Regular performance times are Wednesdays and Thursdays at 7PM, Fridays at 8PM, Saturdays at 8:30PM and Sundays at 2PM. There is also one Saturday matinee at 3PM on March 20 only. A free Artistic Director's Forum will be held following the Sunday matinee on March 14.

Performances will take place at the historic Bangor Opera House, a handicap-accessible theatre located at 131 Main Street in downtown Bangor.

Press Gang Publishers heard it and wrote to me asking me if they could publish it as a book." As Elana continued work on the book, she had to research many aspects of life in the turn of the century. "I had to read the really dry stuff," she said, "like the history of the grain trade in Odessa. I couldn't go to Russia, so I was looking for descriptions of streets and figuring out what daily life was like.

My girlfriend Susan Levenkind is a librarian and she was very good at finding things out for me. I would read a book and then use their bibliography as a starting point for what to read next.”

A friend gave her a book about the Women's Trade Union League, which turned out to be quite a lesbian organization. She went to labor libraries, and even looked up the transportation system in New York City at the turn of the century. At book readings, Elana prefers sections of her book that describe the pogroms in Russia. "I also like to read the sections that have a little sex in them," she said. For example, when Chava and Rose fall in love: "Rose leaned towards me, put her hand on my cheek to turn my face so we could see each other... So if you want to and I want to, who's to stop us?"

I pulled the temperance down to the bottom of my lungs. This was harder than going out on strike. I moved my lips onto Rose's. Together. We had been lying in bed together for more than two years. Careful. Cousins. Left side, right side, I'm worn out, me too, goodnight. No, I changed my mind as the kiss engulfed our faces and my hands found the soft flesh of her shoulders and pressed her close.

This was easier than going on strike. This was easier than anything." The response from readers has been wonderful. "I've gotten love letters saying 'This is in my grandmother's story' or 'now I understand my history' or heterosexual women in their 70s or 80s who love this story," said Elana. The "Lammies" (Lambda Literary Awards) are to lesbian writing what the Oscars are to Hollywood. Elana's award for lesbian fiction is the equivalent of the best actress award in the Oscars. She was awarded the most recent Lammie for lesbian fiction.

For further information, contact Elana Dykewomon at dyke@atsu.com. BEYOND THE PALE was published in 1997 by Press Gang Publishers, 225 East 17th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1L5, Canada. Esther Rothblum is Professor of Psychology at the University of Vermont and Editor of the Journal of Lesbian Studies. She can be reached at John Dewey Hall, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT, email: esther.rothblum@uvm.edu.
The Maine Jewish Film Festival

The films are: Treyf (USA, 1998, 54 minutes, 16 mm. English) Directed by Alisa Lebow and Cynthia Madamsky

How do two young progressive Jewish lesbians struggle with the conflicts of Judaism and secularism, being lesbian and being part of the traditional Jewish community and everything in between?

In part, by making this film. The exploration of the directors’ partnership opens with a supermarket conveyor belt, saturated with the cultural delights of Passover. Treyf traces the themes of Passover: freedom, oppression, tolerance, understanding, bitter, sweet, and the dream that peace and justice will prevail.

The filmmakers wrote, “These themes speak not only to our Jewish experience, but to our lesbian experience.”

A central subtext is the struggle to create identity.

AND

Looks on Books

First Resort by Nanci Little

Paise for First Resort, a new novel by Nanci Little.

“As she did with her earlier novels, Thin Fire and The Grass Widow, Nanci Little creates a completely credible universe, peoples it with unforgettable individuals, and invites us along for the emotionally charged ride. First Resort is an extraordinary exploration of friendship between a lesbian and a straight woman. Little’s characters become our friends too, women and men who live on in our memories and in our hearts.”

Deborah Peifer, Bay Area Reporter

“She captures the physical worlds — of the fairways, the clubhouse, of high society elegance — and the emotional worlds — of fear, of confusion, of friendship — with precision. Little distinguishes between what characters say and what they keep to themselves, and those distinctions reveal the facades that people use to maintain propriety or to survive. Don’t let the golf scare you away from this read.

Even if putt-putt under the windmills is the closest you’ll ever come to a round of eighteen, First Resort offers more than a lesson in teeing up. And if you are a golfer, it may improve your short game.”


Synopsis: At twenty-five, Jordan Bryant was a rising star on the LPGA tour. At forty, those dreams a distant and painful memory, she maintains an almost clinical distance between herself and the people she meets at Catawamteak, the grand resort on the coast of Maine where she is Director of Golf. Until she meets Gillian Benson.

Widowed and left wealthy by a husband “the whole town knew was an abusive, philandering bastard,” (Gillian comes to Maine in search of a piece of summer, or perhaps a summer of peace: to Catawamteak, with its acres of oceans and tides of sweet-mown grass, openness with as few limits as her new found freedom. First Resort is a meticulous exploration of the growth of the bonds of affection, love, and friendship between women.

About the author: Nanci Little received her degree from the University of Maine. A US Army veteran, she has worked as a truck driver, waitron, draftsperson, carpenter, cookbook editor, secretary, administrative coordinator for a battered women’s project, home health care provider, massage therapist, and writer. She is an avid golfer and bicyclist.

She worked from her educational and military experiences in her writing of the well-received Thin Fire, which was nominated for the 1993 American Library Association’s Gay and Lesbian Award for Literature. In The Grass Widow, she continued to pursue her affection for both the period piece and the thoughtful exploration of her characters’ emotional development that won her critical acclaim for Thin Fire.

First Resort is her third novel. She has several more simmering in the hard drive.

PRICE: $11
BINDING: Trade Paper
LENGTH: 323 pages
DATE: December 1998
PUBLISHER: Odd Girls Press, P.O. Box 2157
Anaheim, CA, 92814-2157, 800-821-0232
publisher@oddgirlspress.com
http://www.oddgirlspress.com
DISTRIBUTORS: Alamo Square, Bookpeople, Koen, and Ingram

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Gretchen Gordon
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March 13 - April 11 Saturdays

Street Fair, the longest running outdoor arts

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ary. PAPA

7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at MWPA,

Writers & Publishers Alliance, will teach a comprehen-

ntion newspaper and magazine

for market information and sample formats will be _ dis-

at Bowdoin

including Life List (Down East Books, 1997). He 's pub­

distributed.

and market a work of their own. The cost is $90 for

rollment is limited to 15.

John Cole, one of the veteran instructors of Maine

ivers & Publishers Association, will teach a comprehen-

ive-six week course on writing and publishing nonfic-

istorically. Historically, about half of the students who have taken

d this course published their work, (some during and most soon

fter the class ended). The class will be held on six

secutive Tuesdays, March 16 through April 20, from

0:00 - 9:00 p.m. at MWPA, 12 Pleasant Street, Brunswick.

Participants will learn about the markets for nonfic-
nal newspaper and magazine articles, nonfiction books,

and corporate nonfiction (business publications). Sources

r market information and sample formats will be dis-

tributed.

Topics include manuscript planning, preparation and

evaluation; participants will receive individual consulta-

ions with the instructor. Participants will develop, write,

and market a work of their own. The cost is $90 for MWPA

members, $120 for others. Call 729-6333 to reg. en-

rollment is limited to 15.

John Cole of Brunswick is the author of 18 books

cluding The List and Own East Books, 1997. He's pub-

lished hundreds of articles in such noted publications as

he New York Times, Fortune, Field & Stream, Audubon,

ewsday, Sports Illustrated, Smithsonian, Yankee, Atlantic

Monthy, and Life. Cole is the editor of Maine In Print

and was the founding editor of Maine Times. He has taught

at Bowdoin College and USM.

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Needs volunteers to be a buddy to someone with HIV/AIDS, their partner or

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Portland: March 26 and 27, April 2 and 3

If you are interested in becoming a Buddy, or would like more information,

please call Jill Wallace at (207) 725-4955 or email at mass@gwi.net

February 1999 Community Pride Reporter Page 9

Maine Shakespeare Festival On-The-Beard Bookking

March 2 Central High School - Coralie, ME

March 3 Mattawaoook Academy - Lincoln, ME

March 4 Hermon High School - Hermon, ME

March 4 University of Maine @ Presque Isle - Presque

de, ME

March 5 Easton High School - Easton, ME

March 16 Greenville Schools - Greenville, ME

March 25-26 Bridgton Academy - North Bridgton, ME

March 30 Calais Middle School - Calais, ME

April 8 Nokomis High School, Newport, ME

April 10 Theatre at Monmouth, Monmouth, ME

Honing the personal essay:

A Critiquing Workshop

Portland Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance is spon-

soring a critiquing workshop for essays led by Elizabeth

Peavy. The workshop will be held On Saturday, March 13

from 10:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m. at the Portland Public Library, room 419, Elm Street, Portland.

Creating stories into essays presents a number of chal-

lenges: how to develop a clearly focused idea, how to con-

struct a compelling opening and memorable close, how to make the story come alive with vivid detail, and how to pare

away the fluff. And that's after the writer has managed to get started.

The instructor will discuss these topics, but the focus of this workshop is on the participants' manuscripts. Participants

will read their essays aloud and then the group will discuss ways to improve them, using the constructive criti-

quing techniques introduced by the instructor.

Each participant is asked to bring an essay for dis-

cussion; the essay should be a maximum of two typed pages. The cost is $45 for MWPA members, $65 for others.

Call 729-6333 to register enrollment is limited to 15.

Elizabeth Peavy of Portland is a contributing editor to Down East magazine. She has written a biweekly column for Casco Bay Weekly since 1996. Her essays and articles have also appeared in Down East, Yankee Magazine's Travel Guide to New England, The Yankee Traveler, Offshore, and Maine Times. Peavy is an award-winning poet and instruc-

tor at USM.

Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance (MWPA) is a nonprofit literary organization that promotes the value of

literature and the art of Writing by building a community of writers, readers, and publishers within Maine. For informa-

tion call 729-6333 or write MWPA, 12 Pleasant St.,

Brunswick, ME 04011.
Flaming Productions presents "Jeffrey"

"The way it started was at Gay Pride. We were handing out fliers for ANGELS IN AMERICA. That’s how we met — doing ANGELS at Mad Horse. Craig had on his JEFFREY T-shirt from the Boston production, and people kept coming up to us, saying, ‘When are you doing JEFFREY?’ So when we came home that day we were like, ‘Huh...well...let’s see what happens’. I mean, it was sort of a joke; we didn’t think anything would come of it..."

J.D. Merritt is describing the genesis of Flaming Productions’ Maine premiere of Paul Rudnick’s JEFFREY, opening at the Oak Street Theatre on Wednesday, February 17. Well known and praised for his work as an actor, primarily as a Mad Horse company member, Merritt will don another hat for this play as co-producer with his partner, Craig Hook, and director Wendy Poole Houk continues the story. "We had to come up with a name for ourselves, so originally it was ‘Flaming Fag.’ Our logo was going to be a burning cigarette, but we decided that would be a little harsh. So we cut it back to ‘Flaming’ to make it more of a positive thing — Flaming’ as in light, shedding light."

"So we sent for the rights, and we got ‘em," J.D. picks up. "That was right around the time Mike Levine was pulling back his schedule at the Oak Street, so there were slots open. It all sort of snowballed at the same time, so we put it before the Oak Street board and got the slot. So suddenly it was, ‘Oh we really have to do this now.’"

"We really wanted to do it at Oak Street; that was one of our criteria. At that point, nobody knew how things were going to shake out, if Oak Street was going to maintain.”

"Flaming as in light, shedding light."

The high point of his artistic work thus far has been his brilliant portrayal of the ranting Price Water in Mad Horse’s production of Tony Kushner’s ANGELS IN AMERICA, Parts I and II. And a personal milestone as well with the emergence of a relationship with guest artist Craig Hook, playing Price’s conflicted lover, Louis.

A recent transplant from outside of Pittsburgh by way of Bowling Green University and Boston, Hook had come to Mad Horse when a hole opened up in the cast of DARING, the play is needed to get away. I actually didn’t intend to stay here, but I did, and ended up auditioning for Mike Levine. He cast me in BURN THIS."

"My intention was to become a lawyer, but I took a theater course. This is actually pretty funny, but part of that class required that we do 20-30 hours of work in the scene shop. Then I took about three years off, didn’t do anything, but I trained my way into Boston. I played Price in Meisner class at the Juilliard School and won the most professional debut there in JEFFREY for the SpeakEasy Theatre Company.”

"I played Darius in Boston, and Dan Auger is doing a fabulous job with him here. My mission in that role was to show Darius as an optimistic and smart beyond himself. I think because his mind is clear, not cluttered, he almost seemsvacuous. He doesn’t fill his mind up with crap, with negative. It’s not about thinking for him, it’s about living and doing. He kind of empties his head intentionally."

J.D., who’ll be playing Sterling, reinforces the play’s positive outlook.

"The most joy-filled character in the play is Darius, who’s dying. He walks around radiant all the time because he’s filled with life. He knows he’s not going to be, but he’s alive now. Jeffrey (played by Dennis Scott) is all morose and restless, and his life, and here’s Darius saying, ‘Come on, lighten up, go out, have a date, do something! He understands.”

Craig reiterates, “That’s what’s great about this play. It’s not the AIDS victim bitching, moaning, complaining, trying to grab one last desperate thing. The two characters that are infected are uplifting, one of them, Darius, unbe­lievably beaming and positive, who pushes through."

J.D. again, "And Steve (played by Dan Conley), the other character who has the disease, gets frustrated, but he’s very clear about his frustration. It’s like, ‘Can I just be a gay man for a minute? Do I have to be a red ribbon? Do I have to be a symbol for your sympathy? No. I’m still alive. I’m not that patch on the quilt. ’ He’s crystal clear around that.”

The upbeat theme sounded by the play flows into the pair’s outlook as a production team. J.D. defines, "We call it ‘queer’ because we want it to celebrate all of our struggles. ‘Not gay’ as opposed to lesbian. We’d like to find good lesbian pieces because that genre is even smaller than the gay plays."

Craig continues, " ‘Queer’ doesn’t translate for us just as ‘homosexuality’; it translates as ‘unique’. Originally if someone was ‘queer,’ they were different, unique. We think that the most interesting people and topics in this world are ‘queer’ in that sense. That’s the kind of work we want to find and do."

The plays we have, Angels. As Is, THE NORMAL HEART, are extremely important to the gay community, and we should cherish them. They’re part of our history and will be part of our future. AIDS is a very serious issue still, and gay bashing and discrimination, we can’t forget those things.

But we have to balance them. It’s time to take gay theater in new directions. ‘We’re not about being a play factory. We want each production to be fun, an event. We couldn’t do that four times a year."

They have a piece in mind for next year, but “We ain’t tellin’!” J.D. laughs. They both wax rhapsodical about the cast (filled out by Bob Feirier, Ben Turner and Christine Marshall), the crew (led by tech director Tom Carr, their lighting designer/roommate Joan Sand) and director Poole. "I was watching a rehearsal," Craig laughts, ”and I’m thinking, ‘No, no, this isn’t how we did it in Boston.’ But I kept watching, and what she was doing was even better. She’s just amazing.”

"I think finally, in the arc of gay theater,” muses Merritt, “what Rudnick and some other playwrights are doing is transitioning the movement. He’s saying, ‘We can write about these awful things and still have fun with it, be irreverent.’ JEFFREY is an AIDS play, but it’s also one of the funniest pieces of theater in the last 10 years.”

The pair, with co-producer/director Wendy Poole (another of Barnett’s Meisner class alumnus and a vital part of Brunswick’s Theater Project) plan to do a show or two a year.

And again, to the play and its creator, J.D. pays homage. "I still carry one of Rudnick’s essays around and re-read it all the time. His point is that it’s the gay soul that’s behind this movement, the gay soul that has continued to laugh and have fun in spite of these terrible, insurmountable odds. That’s what he celebrates with JEFFREY, why this play touches me on every level, because it’s so funny and it’s so moving and it’s so filled with joy. Father Dan says at one point, ‘How dare you not lunge for any shred of happiness?’ "

So lunge for your phone and call (207) 775-5103 for Tickets/reservations.
Jean Meike

"On My Way"

"Meike's vocal style is unique, featuring an acrobatic delivery powered by palpable emotions reminiscent of Happy Rhodes or Kate Bush but with more of a blues-leaning." Lucky Clark for Central Maine Newspapers.

Jean Meike (pronounced Mike) began her singing career as a toddler singing gospel music at churches all over New England with her family. She has written songs and played her music since then in bands that developed devoted local followings in Maine.

In 1994 she began her solo career and recorded her first CD DANCE ON FIRE, released in 1997, on recording gear purchased while working as a truck driver at a local paper mill. DANCE ON FIRE generated enthusiastic reviews and fans locally and nationally. "Stimulating, exciting, and reliable!" wrote Paul Williams, editor and founder of Crawdaddy! "I love it."

Jean has played regularly at The Left Bank Cafe in Blue Hill, Maine, a venue often called the Cafe Lena of the 90's, that is frequented by many nationally known singer/songwriters and bands.

"From ballads to blues to rock Meike has an ear for the spiritual in her music. Her songs serve as signposts along life's journey," Bangor Daily News. Jean's second CD On My Way is the next phase of the journey. The music is unique and powerful, as it was her voice.

Highlights from On My Way include "The Clown," "Stand Tall," and "Still Driven." Every cut on this CD tells its own compelling story of inner growth and healing and the ability we have to develop spiritual connection through relationship with other people.

Jean Meike taps into a deeper source and sings about what it's like to be human on this planet with a message delivered by music that seems to flow freely and has a life of its own.

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"Triumphant"
-Kevin Thomas, The Los Angeles Times

"A towering achievement"
-Rex Reed, The New York Observer

Wild Oscar's Happy Puzzle

"Where there is sorrow, there is holy ground."—19th century Irish wit Oscar Wilde

ACROSS
1 more of less vertical (9)
6 Miami gay area, 2 words
14 singer Houston, initial
15 understanding
17 town of Nova Scotia
18 TOY in a mirror
20 boss of "Won't be my friend, Mr. Rogers Neighborhood, initials"
22 saint abbr.
23 General Services Administration
24 gay room in Mass.
25 forced out of place abbr.
31 group for anarchists, abbr.
32 when we get our messages mixed, he is a
33 chemical symbol for gold
34 chemical symbol for radium
37 19th century poetess Dickinson, initials ("Bronte is not caused. It is")
38 Linlithgow, con Rita Mae Brown's best-selling book
39 snake like fishes
44 French magazine pronoun
45 snake eyes
46 1953-1993 song "A Good Man is Hard to Find"
47 every individual one, abbr.
48 Spanish peseta
49 International AIDS Awareness day every Dec., 1 word
50 search ex intensely
51 one skilled in healing arts, abbr.
52 senior abbr.
53 L.A. gay area, 2 words
54 musical mile, abbr.
55 FDR's wife, initials
56 sounds like 'are double you'
57 badminton abbr.
58 en. abbr.
59 L.A. gay abbr.

DOWN
10 at first; formerly
11 cars
12 chemical symbol for chromium
13 having a bad boy poster from the 50's
14 voice loss sound
15 organization abbr.
16 very small
17 a point of arch
18 ocean abbr.
20 search ex intensely
21 conglomerate of many
22 5th and 3rd consonants of the alphabet
23 4 high degrees worn by women in late 18th century
24 Solar system abbr.
25 trouble
26 behavior
27 receive as a return for service
28 internet that expresses extreme pleasure
30 sets
34 a postal address abbr.
35 W.Va. senator
36 epics
37 coral strip in the water
38 2 words
39 smell
40 there were several years of this at Stonewall
41 Land of Lincoln state, abbr.
42 TV & film mogul Turner
43 international news-gatherer
44 boy
45 W Va senator
46 Richard
47 very small
50 rest (as a postal address abbr.)
51 trouble
52 sunrise
53 fxx
54 TVB, (film abbr.
55 under standing is a two-way street.)
56 sounds like 'are double you'
57 Solution else where
58 1999 GULF HURRICANE PUZZLE GA42.
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 Initialed name: Fred Rogers

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Puzz l e GAY4 2
initialed name: Fred Rogers, Whitney Houston, Emily Dickinson, Eleanor Roosevelt

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THORMY EAN TISH
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SEMOI HERP MNOI ARED
RUSTYFRUITJUNGLE
SELEKSELESPICARK
SINGWORLDWADISDAY
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initialed name: Fred Rogers, Whitney Houston, Emily Dickinson, Eleanor Roosevelt

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WING SPIT REEUP
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