



# Capitol Notebook

**Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance**

**PO Box 232**

**Hallowell Me 04347**

## MLGPA's Drive for Civil Rights Bill is Fierce

From Houlton, Bangor and Portland to Augusta, MLGPA is all fired up to win this year. A new slate of officers, fresh ideas from dozens of new volunteers, and a determination borne out of our success in Portland and Lewiston, all point strongly to victory in the Statehouse this spring.

We have even come up with a snappy new logo for the 1993 legislative campaign.



### New Survey on Anti-Gay Discrimination

MLGPA has been busy organizing for the hearings and lobbying efforts to come. We need solid evidence of discrimination to prove that we need these statutory protections. You may have already received a survey in the recent MLGPA mailing or at a local meeting place. This information is absolutely crucial to convincing our lawmakers that we need this bill. If you haven't done it yet, please fill out the survey and mail it in. Please, do it today.

### Attend the Legislative Hearing

We need lesbians, gay men and sympathetic friends to testify in Augusta. Each of us has a personal experience we can share. The fear of discrimination is almost as oppressive as being evicted or fired. We need people who have clearly experienced discrimination. We also need prominent business and civic leaders to declare their support. The hearing process is one of the most critical pieces to getting our bill passed. The hearing before the Judiciary Committee on LD 246 is scheduled for Wednesday, **March 24 at 1 p.m.** at the Augusta Civic Center.

Whether you are testifying or not, everyone is welcome to attend. The hearing will be well attended by Jasper Wyman and his cronies, too. We must make a stronger showing than the religious right. It is a great chance for you to view the process in action. Plan to spend the afternoon with your friends at the Civic Center.

If you are able to testify, please call:

- Judy Edgerly, Augusta, 626-9309
- Sally Sutton, Portland, 774-5444
- Jim Martin, Bangor, 990-3420

**see The Bill, page 2**

## RI Program Exposes Christian Agenda

On the day reserved for celebration of the lesbian/gay civil rights movement in Maine, the "stealth strategy" of the Christian right was the focus of a day-long panel held in Providence, RI. Nationally known experts Chip Berlet, a Cambridge researcher; Margaret Cerullo, Professor of sociology and feminist studies at Hampshire College, and Arthur Lipkin of Harvard University shared their experiences with the religious right and responded to questions from the 200 attendees.

If there is a conclusion to be drawn from this event it is that we have to rely on ourselves. We must do our homework and understand our opposition. We must educate—beginning with our liberal and progressive friends. Sure, they support us, but how well do they *really* know us? Beware of the "politics of respectability" dividing a fragile community.

**see Rhode Island, page 2**

## A Financial Boon-Not

Even though the Annual Dinner was a huge success, with over 400 people coming together to celebrate our successes, it was a financial disappointment. Because there were several entrances to the banquet, a number of people (more than thirty!) walked in, sat down, and joined in the celebration without coming through the "payment" line.

While we are certainly happy to have had such a large and enthusiastic crowd, we are now faced with a budgetary problem. The banquet is not designed to make money, but we expect to be able to break even! *If you attended the banquet and haven't paid for your ticket yet, or if you know someone who simply forgot to take care of that small detail, please take a minute and send us a donation of \$25.00 to help offset the deficit.*

No one is taking notes, and you need not identify yourself. Just write a check to cover the cost, mail it to one of our post office boxes and consider it a donation to a very good cause!

These donations can be sent to:

MLGPA, PO Box 232, Hallowell ME 04347  
MLGPA, PO Box 1894, Portland ME 04104



## Rhode Island from front

Chip Berlet calls Pat Robertson a bigot and a crank. He says that the ignorance and cowardice of the press is the only reason that Robertson is not reviled for that. Scapegoating is critical to a campaign of hate and an important part of "Dominion Theology," which assumes that before Christ returns, secular society must be controlled. The right wages their campaign with half truths, emotional rhetoric and slogans like "special rights." The greatest accomplishment of the religious right is their transferral of a theological concept—evil—into a secular arena. Berlet concludes that the campaign of the right should not be seen as a conspiracy but as a political movement which has caused us to mobilize to redress our grievances.

Arthur Lipkin outlined familiar points of attack of the right. Their challenge of the 10% figure is totally irrelevant. What is relevant is that study of this group has been stymied by the right, politically. The right rejects all genetic and biological theories of homosexuality. They call it a choice—conveniently overlooking the civil protection given those who chose religion. The "cured" are always paraded when the immutability of homosexuality is the topic. We are attacked for not being "family centered" and for not being monogamous. HIV/AIDS statistics are offered with appalling casualness as are statements centered on that plumb of the right wing: Recruitment and Predation.

Margaret Cerullo defines this political moment as being "somewhere between hope and terror." She told the gathering that we have not confronted liberals for a long time. The flap over gays in the military shows us just how uncertain and timid the liberals are and how little our liberal friends know about our lives and culture.

The experience of Oregon and Colorado were a focus of the Cerullo lecture in which she characterized the polarization of issues in the days before the election as reminiscent of Weimar Germany. Though there was victory in Oregon, 43% of the voters were against us. Margaret Cerullo urges us to ask not just the question did we defeat the right, but have we developed our community and our lives? Have we given people any insight into who gays and lesbians are, or have we only built opposition to the right wing?

The homophobic movement is driven by the structures of racist thought. Our task, according to Cerullo, is to reveal the processes through which discrimination becomes ok.

Margaret Cerullo's most challenging argument is one for us to ponder. She says the politics of respectability are doomed to failure. "Rather than cement our cause to the powerful, we must cement our cause to the marginal, the despised, and the excluded. The strongest and deepest challenge to our community is who will represent us. We have become complicit by putting our whitest, most moneyed, most mainstream face forward. The failure to bond with genuine minorities is ours." Her observation that the politics of respectability leads to internal policing rings true for our experience. Have we not dressed some up and tried to hide others? The face-to-face component of a grass-roots campaign is missing in our campaigns. We

## The Bill, from front

### Outreach

For too long, many legislators have refused to vote for our bill claiming there are no gays or lesbians in their districts. MLGPA has a unique program called the "Real Stories Project" which makes it possible to tell the story of someone who cannot come out. We are doing interviews with those who have lived in small towns and writing short stories, disguising names, to sketch a picture of rural gay life. These will be mailed to legislators on oversized postcards. Send your "Real Story" to PO Box 1894, Portland ME 04104.

### Call or Write

Don't forget to call or write your legislator. We can't emphasize enough how important this is. The opposition has organized churches across Maine into letter writing factories. Legislators gauge public opinion by counting letters and phone calls. Don't write a book. Tell your story, or send a card, or make a call. Don't rely on somebody else to do it. Each of us must. If you don't know your legislators' names, call your town office. Here are the addresses:

Your Representative	Your Senator
State House Station 2	State House Station 3
Augusta ME 04333	Augusta ME 04333
Representative Phones 800-423-290	
Senator Phones 800-423-6900	

### Area Meetings

You can become part of the legislative effort by attending regional committee meetings.

- Augusta at 7:15 p.m. on Mondays at City Center 626-9309
- Bangor on Thursday at 7 p.m. Peace & Justice Center 990-3420
- Portland 7 p.m. on Wednesday 100 Middle St 5th floor west 761-8367
- Houlton/Aroostook call 448-2294 for time and place

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## Funding Cuts Rumored

Rumors indicate that cuts from funding for HIV prevention work are being considered. Controversy was stirred when Sen. Gould of Waldo called attention to invitations to a "Safer Sex Party". During a broadcast interview, Rep. Foss of Yarmouth decried use of tax money for erotic material for the parties. Grant funds totalled only \$2500 for the year.

Please take time to remind both your representatives that these effective programs for gay and bisexual men should be maintained.

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have lost touch with that element because we are afraid of it. We must beware of putting everything on the high tech campaign.

Admitting that this view polarizes us, Cerullo adds that we must welcome others from supportive groups but ask how much they are going to extract from us in terms of obedience and conformity.

In his comments to the group, Metropolitan Community Church representative Richard Matera pondered why our community lacks the commitment our oppressors exhibit. He urged us to educate and not be complacent. "We cannot afford," he concluded, "to lose nine million people."



## Letter from the President

Dear ML/GPA Friends,

On behalf of the Board of ML/GPA, I'd like to thank all of you who have supported our endeavors over the years and especially this year. The most pressing activity before us at this moment is the passage of LD 246, our civil rights bill. That includes the March 24 hearing on the bill at the Civic Center in Augusta, the first year at this location, and the outreach to Lesbians, Gays, friends, and clergy to reach out to your Legislator.

I am empowering each one of you to become an *ad hoc* representative for LD 246 and to "adopt your Legislator!" Never before have we been so close to passage of this bill. You are our vital link. Many of the representatives we have spoken to think two thoughts about the bill: 1) they don't think that Lesbians and Gays are discriminated against; and 2) they don't have any Lesbians or Gays in their districts. Appalled? You personally can help to correct their misconceptions.

Whether your legislator has supported our civil rights before or not, call or write to them to support LD 246. Get all of your friends together at your house and get them to do the same thing. Write three letters; one to your Senator, one to your Representative, and one to the newspaper that you read. Come out to your legislator. Remember: it is not enough for them to change their minds about supporting us. We need to make change happen in us and that will create outer change. When the drag queens at Stonewall stood up and fought back against the police 20 years ago, they started the revolution that we are all part of today. LET'S CREATE OUR OWN CHANGE THIS YEAR—A PRO-ACTIVE MOVEMENT. Let's mobilize into a power center—without fear—and we shall surely generate wonderful results.

If you want support at your letter-writing parties at your home, please call me. We must stop at nothing to be heard. Our stories, our lives, our future and our children's futures are at stake and must be heard. The moment is prime to contribute positively to the Reality of Change. I and all the communities with whom I am networking implore you to action. Write, call, ACT—TO END DISCRIMINATION. Join the effort. Join our team. Join hands. Together we can accomplish far, far more than any series of individuals.

I know that my friends will read this appeal and respond to my words. Let me name all of you as my friends. Hear my plea as if I were in your heart. Let no one carry your load in this effort. Share with us in whatever way you deem best. NOW IS THE TIME!

In the Spirit,

Paula Aboud, President  
445-2863

*Thank You to Silent Auction Donors  
Your generosity earned us \$1500.00*

## Hancock County Action

Hancock County MLGPA members: There are two local undertakings in which I hope to attract your participation.

One is a "Citizens' Task Force" (so called by the Attorney General's office) to advise local police departments about needed responses to hate and bias crimes. Police chiefs of Ellsworth, Bar Harbor, and Bucksport (and maybe other towns) went to a one-day training about hate and bias crimes in Augusta in December, and are presumably open to citizen input about hate and bias acts. Rather than having several Task Forces in this little county, I am trying to organize a single committee which can be a liaison between all police departments and local minority targets of hateful acts. The most significant such minority group around here is clearly the gay and lesbian population. I already have volunteers Bucksport, Hancock, Trenton, and Bar Harbor, but need some from other parts of Hancock County. If you are willing to discuss the possibility of being part of this advisory committee (or Task Force) please give me a call at 667-2358.

The other is the Hancock County Community Network, an organization which promotes interactions among local persons who are in justice, peace, environmental, and human rights work. The organizations our active members are involved in include domestic violence and child protection work, churches, several peace groups, Downeast AIDS Network, the Democratic Committee, the Green Party, etc. With the upcoming Civil Rights legislation effort by MLGPA, we need the widest community support we can get and I believe it would be very useful to have some gays and lesbians attend and speak up at Network meetings in order to inspire a wide circle of justice-minded persons to become willing to become actively involved in lobbying our legislators and educating churches and other public groups. If you are willing to consider participating in the Network, call me at 667-2358. Peter O. Rees, RR 1 Box 303, Trenton, ME 04605.

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## ME NASW Seeks Providers

The sexual Minority Issues Committee of the Maine Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers is progressing toward the completion of a directory of mental health/services available to and for sexual minority persons in Maine.

When the directory is complete, we hope to distribute it to individuals and organizations, professionals and sexual minority groups and others.

We are seeking the cooperation of Maine service providers in making this directory as comprehensive as possible. If you are a service provider, and would like to receive a copy of our questionnaire, please submit your name to us.

Sexual Minority Issues Committee  
Maine Chapter NASW  
343 Forest Ave  
Portland ME 04101



## Augusta AIDS Summit

A coalition of groups has announced an AIDS Summit for Saturday May 8 at the 69 Winthrop Street Universalist Church. The 10 a.m. open meeting is to discuss critical issues related to HIV/AIDS in Maine and to develop an action plan. The agenda will cover:

- an overview of current efforts to do statewide HIV planning and how affected communities and individuals can connect with the planning process.
- a discussion on deciding how we allocate scarce resources and how we can make do with limited funding.
- a session on finding common ground among all the people and agencies involved with HIV and choosing the issue or theme that we can all make a commitment to, including common public responses and sound bites.

Those who should attend include people with HIV/AIDS, AIDS service providers, HIV activists, people with hemophilia, gay men, lesbians, substance abuse professionals, civil rights activists, jail and prison workers, community-based educators, gay and lesbian businesspeople, bar owners and bartenders, health care workers, public health activists, and other progressive Maine people.

The AIDS Summit is sponsored by the Maine AIDS Alliance, ACT UP, Hemophilia Treatment Center, MLGPA and other organizations.

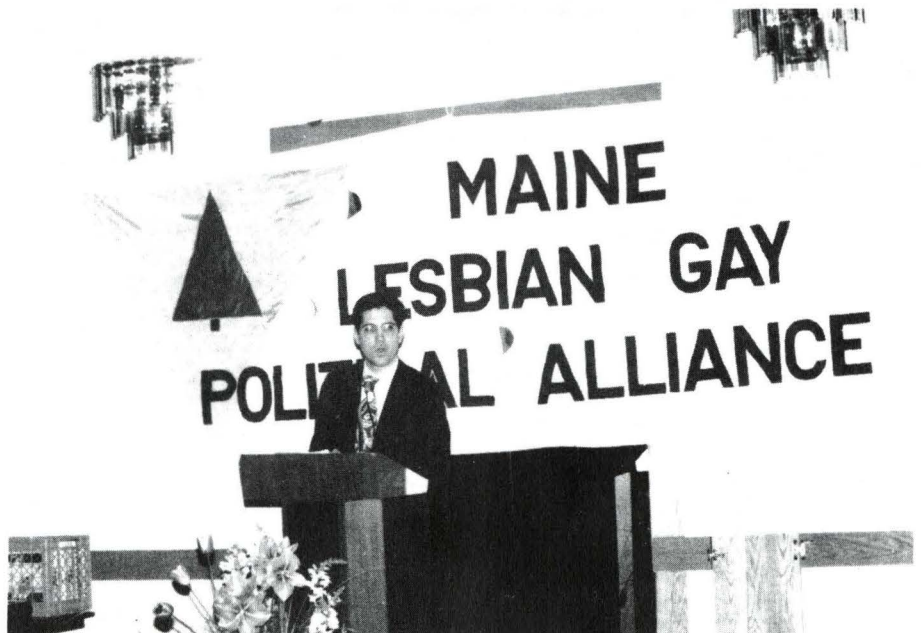
For more information: ACT UP/Portland 828-0566 or the Maine AIDS Alliance 621-2924.

"It is not a question of acceptance, it is one of forgiveness. Not whether you will accept us, but whether we will forgive you."

James Baldwin



Photographer Annette Dragon recorded the activities at the Eighth Annual Awards Banquet. President Paula Aboud (top) warms up the crowd; Terry (center), whose discrimination case brought the United Way of Greater Portland to de-fund the Boy Scouts; Keynote speaker Michael Duffy (bottom); and Senator Dale McCormick.





# 8th Annual Awards Banquet

## 1993 Awards

### Larry Connolly Award

Peter O'Donnell  
Portland City Council

### MLGPA Media Award

Jim Shaffer, President  
Guy Gannett Publishing Co.

### Great Pioneer Award

United Way of Greater Portland

### Cameron Duncan Award

Cindy Bowman

### Community Service Awards

Equal Protection Portland  
Stephen Wessler  
Harold Dickinson  
Dawn Fortune  
Wayne Philbrick

The **Larry Connolly Award** was named after the Portland (District 26) Legislator who died of a heart attack during the 1987 Legislative session. Larry was a champion of the oppressed and fought tirelessly for programs for the people. This award is granted only in years when there is clearly a person who deserves recognition of their work.

The **MLGPA Media Award** is intended to recognize positive coverage of the lesbian/gay community by media organizations or individuals.

The **Great Pioneer Award** recognizes a "first." To qualify for this award, one must have done something original to further the cause of lesbian/gay civil rights.

The **Cameron Duncan Award** is named after a man who pioneered AIDS activism in Maine. Cameron was among the first to share his disease with the public through outreach.

**Community Service Awards** are presented to those whose work on behalf of the lesbian/gay community have enriched the lives of all the residents of Maine.





## Wilde-Stein Bus to DC

Wilde-Stein is offering round-trip transportation via comfortable bus to the march on Washington in April.

Two busses will depart Orono at 9 p.m. on Thursday, April 22, arriving in DC at about 10 a.m. Friday. 25 rooms have been reserved at the Bethesda Hilton by the group.

Rates are reasonable at \$130.00 for the three day trek, based on four per room occupancy. The breakdown is thus: \$60.00 round trip bus fare. \$70.00 room rate for three nights.

The group departs DC at Midnight on April 25, arriving back in Orono at about Noon on Monday, April 26.

Contact Jill Harmon at Wilde-Stein at 581-1596. Space is limited to 94 persons. A \$24.00 deposit is required upon reservation, the balance before departure.

## Report Crime!

### Help Stop Hate Crimes

**Report all cases of violence,  
intimidation and harassment to  
the Attorney General's Office  
Hate-Bias Crime Log  
626-8844**

## Getting There

### Busses

from Orono/Bangor

4 day excursion rate  
rooms available  
possible weekend express  
call Jill at Wilde Stein  
581-1596/581-7319

from Portland

Friday and Saturday departures  
cost \$55

send \$20 deposit to  
MMOWD

c/o PO Box 11502  
Portland ME 04104  
874-2949/761-2059

from Portsmouth

Saturday departure \$50  
603-627-0485/603-357-0979

### Car Pool Information

871-0432 leave

1. your name
2. your phone
3. have ride or need one
4. departure day
5. return day

**no calls after April 21**

### AMTRAK from Boston

1-800-368-8725

frequent trains from Boston  
with unreserved coach seating.

Cost \$128 round trip.

### Maine Breakfast

Sunday morning, join the other Mainers for breakfast before the march at the Holiday Inn on the 1600 block of Rhode Island Ave, just off Dupont Circle. 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Cost \$5.00 Includes beverage, pastries, fresh fruit (and a place to freshen up for bus people.)  
Register by phone 871-9940.

March on Washington HQ 800-554-2220

"The leading argument for keeping lesbians and gays out of the military is showernoia."  
Margaret Cerullo