

# The Newsletter

Fall 2004 • 343 Forest Avenue • Portland, ME 04101 • 207.874.1030 • tty 207.874.1043

Maine Speakout Project is a Program of Community Counseling Center 

## Welcome to "The Newsletter"

Hello!

Welcome to the first edition of "The Newsletter." While Maine Speakout Project (MSOP) has published newsletters in the past, this one is different. This Newsletter is a recognition of Speakout's unique niche in Maine's LGBT community. The decision to Speakout is a deeply personal one. Each and every time a volunteer steps in front of a classroom, synagogue or business, they are revealing the truth of their lives in rare and important ways. As MSOP Advisory Committee member and Speaker Natasha Johnsson often says, 'Speakout is on the frontline of our struggle.' Being on the frontline is in many ways an ideal position. As a result, we are invited into communities and spaces to share our experiences. Sometimes this is humorous and sometimes it is sad. Yet, it is always an authentic experience in front of a new and diverse audience. We see this Newsletter as an opportunity to develop and support our volunteer community while doing this work. We want to provide volunteers and supporters with information they can use in their deeply personal quest to create a society that is inclusive and respectful of differing sexual and gender orientations.

Inside, you will find a variety of information and articles about MSOP events and venues over the past several months. We hope to publish quarterly, and we are looking for Speakers who want to share their perspective and experiences with other volunteers. **If you are interested in writing a short article for an upcoming newsletter, please contact me.**

I am pleased to report that we have fulfilled a total of 14 Speakouts and 6 Everyone Counts in the Workplace speaking engagements since June 2004. MSOP had a busy summer, and we are gearing up for an equally busy fall and winter. Mark your calendars for the following dates and events:

**Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>** – Transgender Day of Remembrance Event at the Glickman Family Library at University of Southern Maine

**Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>** – National Family Week "Celebrating Diverse Families" at the King Middle School in Portland

As we were gathering information and articles we realized that we did not have a unique name to call our latest media creation. As Speakout is a community effort, I am asking you, our dedicated volunteers and supporters, for help and guidance. **Do you have a creative name for the new Speakout Newsletter? Send your contributions to me at [pmccann@commcc.org](mailto:pmccann@commcc.org), or call me at 207.874.1030.** The winner will get a Community Counseling Center tote bag full of surprises!

Lastly, I want to thank each of you for your continued participation and work with Maine Speakout Project. Your stories are the heart and soul of Speakout. As I read over audience feedback surveys, I am continually amazed at the depth of impact and change created by your words and stories. This is both difficult and rewarding work. Know that your effort is deeply valued throughout the community.

With deepest respect and admiration,

*Pamela McCann*

Pam McCann, Maine Speakout Program Coordinator



Pam McCann, MSOP Program Coordinator, and Rosemary Guptill, long-time member of the Speaker's Bureau, pose with the Speakout banner.

## Speakout Celebrates National Coming Out Day with the University of New England

In celebration of National Coming Out Day, traditionally held on October 11<sup>th</sup> to commemorate the 1987 March on Washington DC, Speakout held their fall volunteer training on the Biddeford campus of University of New England (UNE). As part of our outreach and community building efforts, Speakout has formed a relationship with UNE's GLBTQA Student Organization, the Alliance for Sexual Diversity.

This event has helped to strengthen Speakout's ties to the youth community in Maine. As we continue to build this relationship with UNE, we want to branch out to other Maine colleges and universities as well. Our contact at UNE is Travis Erickson, GLBTQA Services Advisor.

The free speaker training took place on Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. Longtime Speakout trainer and volunteer, Louise Tate, showed off her skills to eager participants with the help of Maine Speakout Program Coordinator Pamela McCann. For more information on speaker training, please call Pam at 207.874.1030.



MSOP Advisory Committee Co-Chair, Richard Bilodeau, President & CEO of Community Counseling Center, Leslie Clark Brancato and Perry Sutherland enjoy the festivities at Pride in the Park.



## Maine Speakout Project Advisory Committee

Richard Bilodeau, Co-chair

Bob Carter, Co-chair

Eric Baxter

Patti Brassard

Donna Brunstad

Elliott Cherry

Leslie Clark Brancato

David Cohan

Laura Gottfried

Tara Healy

Holly Howard

Connie Howe

Natasha Johnson

Lonnie (Lawrence) Leeman

Daniel Pelletier

Everett R. Perlman

### How to Give

*Contributions can be sent to:*

Maine Speakout Project  
343 Forest Avenue  
Portland, Maine 04101-2006

### How to Volunteer

Help us to get our speakers invited to your club, church, school committee or workplace lunch-and-learn. Get trained to become a speaker. Volunteer to work an event. There is so much you can do to help!

For more information, call Pam McCann at 207.874.1030 or send an email to [pmccann@commcc.org](mailto:pmccann@commcc.org).

### MSOP Mission

*The mission of Maine Speakout Project is to create a society that is inclusive and respectful of people of differing sexual and gender orientations by providing opportunities for non-divisive dialogue.*



Wife and husband, Richard Hall and Carol Sue Hayden, (top) and a group from the Allen Avenue Unitarian Universalist Church (bottom) show their support at *Walk With The Ones You Love*.

## Speakout Special Thanks

Thanks to Katie Emery, Speakout Intern and hard working volunteer, for her energy and support all summer long!

### What People in the Community are saying about Speakout

*"It is so wonderful to have you share your personal stories and experiences."*

University of Maine Counseling Program

*I felt it took great courage for both the presenters to share their stories-they should both be applauded. Bravo!*

The Spurrwink School

*"This discussion was so valuable for queer and trans visibility in the young activist Mainer community."*

Burdock Gathering

*"I feel more comfortable with the topic, so maybe now I can help others be more understanding."*

Unity College, Resident Assistant Training

WALK WITH THE ONES YOU  
**LOVE**

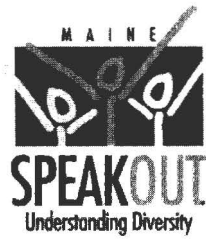
## Pride Week 2004 by Pamela McCann

Being new to the Portland community, I eagerly looked forward to this year's annual Southern Maine PRIDE festivities, *Vive La Difference*. I was especially excited that Speakout was a part of the events. This is an amazing year to be out and proud. Working with the Maine Speakout Project over the past six months, I felt that pride more than ever before. Positive change has been taking place in Maine, Massachusetts, New York, San Francisco and the world. We are a community that has hungered for change and acknowledgment. Activists, advocates, lawyers, educators, as well as average men and women, have worked hard to accomplish change. And, they are succeeding. Same sex couples are marrying! LGBT relationships and families are finally being recognized and supported by laws and lawmakers in Maine. PRIDE 2004 was a celebration of these incredible and long over-due changes.

PRIDE week began with the 7<sup>th</sup> annual *Walk With the Ones You Love* around Back Cove. Maine Speakout, Community Counseling Center, Outright, Parents and Friends of Gays and Lesbians, the Allen Avenue Unitarian Church, along with many other supporters, attended the event. Simultaneous events took place in Camden and Brunswick. *Walk With the Ones You Love* brought together over 200 Mainers of differing races, religions, ethnicity, political affiliation, sexual orientation and gender identity to create a safe space for everyone.

Despite the initial rain and fog, the PRIDE Rally, Parade and Festival were a huge achievement. Southern Maine PRIDE reported that this was the largest parade ever, with more walking groups and floats participating. Youth leaders from Portland Outright were Parade Grand Marshals and started the event carrying a huge 70-foot PRIDE flag down Congress Street and the parade route. They were greeted with cheers and claps the entire way. The Festival had excellent entertainment with the band Sly Chi, Pepper MaShay-Dance Diva Extraordinaire and Naya's Trance Middle Eastern Dance Ensemble.

My first PRIDE Week in Portland was a great deal of fun. I felt a sense of community, purpose and celebration that was exhilarating. The week reaffirmed and energized me as an advocate, activist and educator. Southern Maine PRIDE set out to collaborate, celebrate and communicate with the LGBT community and allies, and they accomplished their goal. Thanks to Southern Maine PRIDE and the many volunteers for the hard work and time spent creating PRIDE 2004. Maine Speakout Project was honored to participate in these events.



## Maine SpeakOut Project's "Out of Our Pantries" Recipe Submission Form

*\*Recipes must be received by 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 1<sup>st</sup> for inclusion in cookbook*

Recipe Category: ☐ Appetizers, Beverages ☐ Soups, Salads ☐ Vegetables ☐ Main Dishes ☐ Breads, Rolls  
☐ Desserts ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Recipe Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Ingredients** (please use these abbreviations: c., tsp, Tbsp, pkg., qt., oz., lb.)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Method** (include oven temp & any other requirements)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Notes**

_____
_____

**Anecdote or Quote**

_____
_____
_____
_____



Maine Speakout Project is a program of  
Community Counseling Center

*A United Way member agency*

*Thank you for your contribution!*

Please send submissions to:  
Maine Speakout Project, c/o Nicole Pelletier  
343 Forest Avenue, Portland, ME 04101-2006  
Fax: (207) 874-1004 • email: [npelletier@commcc.org](mailto:npelletier@commcc.org)



## From the Advisory Committee

Greetings to Maine Speakout Project Volunteers.

As many of you know, it has been a very exciting year for the Maine Speakout Project. We recently celebrated the first anniversary of being a part of Community Counseling Center. As one of the center's community outreach programs, we have been able to expand the work we do to create a society that is inclusive and respectful of people of differing sexual and gender orientations. Through the use of non-divisive dialogue, we are helping everyone from high school students to senior citizens gain a better understanding of the importance of living in a diverse community.

We'd like to personally thank each and every speaker in our ever-expanding speaker's bureau. Over the past year, you have bravely spoken out from Wiscasset to Portland to Wells. You have shared stories of your life and your experience in school and churches and lunchrooms. The work that you do on behalf of Speakout is not only central to our mission but the very reason the organizations exists.

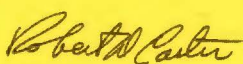
In order to support the work our speakers do, we have worked very hard on expanding the visibility of Speakout. The annual Walk with the Ones You Love drew the biggest crowd in our history with over 300 people participating this year. In June, we joined Pride in the Park holding the first Out of Our Closets yard sale. These events helped us raise \$1,300 and we hope to make it an annual affair. In March, we held a mixer at The Roxy drawing almost 75 people. We have established strong working relationships with Outright, Southern Maine Pride and Equality Maine. And the list goes on.

For all the things we've accomplished, there are still "miles" to go. We must continue to speak out until every person in our community has the same rights and protections under the law. We will hold more events to rally the spirit of our community. And we will share hundreds, if not thousands, of personal testimonies and stories until the diversity that makes a community stronger is accepted in every neighborhood, city and state where we live.

Together our voices will be heard.



Richard Bilodeau  
Co-Chair



Bob Carter  
Co-Chair

Maine Speakout Project Advisory Committee

## "I now pronounce you....ummmmm."

excerpts taken from an article in the Lewiston Sun-Journal by Lew Alessio (Spring '04)

*June will bring weddings as usual, and as unusual as many of us have ever seen. How do we avoid blushing more than the bride, if there even is one? For those who do not feel a need to witness their personal morality to the happy couple, yet do feel a need to avoid a slurping-the-soup faux pas in this new nuptial neighborhood, here are some suggestions for the RSVP-challenged.*

**"What do I say when I am invited to a gay wedding?"**

"Thank you. We are so happy for you both." Don't worry if the words don't fall trippingly off the tongue. Relax, smile, this is new territory for everyone, including the marrying couple. It's OK. Weddings are supposed to be exciting. That's what makes them fun.

**"Well, if one of them is the groom, who is the other guy?"**

The other groom. (Remember, relax.)

**"But, I don't know the proper terms to use."**

Which terms? Beautiful? Handsome? Wish, hope, congratulations, happiness? Don't worry about it. Spoken in kindness, even the wrong terms aren't a big deal. Here's some help:

"Gay" is commonly used to refer to both men and women generally (as in "gay weddings are legal"), and specifically to homosexual men. "Lesbian" refers to a woman, of course. "Lesbian woman" and "gay man" are less objectifying and more friendly. By the way, skip "homosexual" entirely unless you are a scientist or writing a term paper. Likewise, "queer." Too easy to offend.

The most important word to remember—"love."

**"Should we bring the children?"**

If they are invited, sure! What a wonderful opportunity for you to help them understand this historic societal event. Tell them this is new for you, too. Kids are great at helping adults adjust to change. Were you thinking of taking them to a boxing match or war movie instead?

Go! Dress up, have a terrific time, eat cake, drink champagne, laugh, cry, throw rose petals. I promise you, you will be glad you did.

*Lew Alessio is a speaker with Maine Speakout Project, a program of Community Counseling Center of Portland. Speakout addresses issues of discrimination in Maine. He lives in Greene with his husband, Jim Shaffer. They were married August 25, 2001, and everything was perfect.*

## Welcome Newest Members of the Speakout Volunteer Community

Vicky Delfino, Debbie McBride and Susan DeGilberto completed Speaker Training on August 7<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations!

## Out of our Pantries

This past summer Speakout brought you "Out of Our Closets," our madly successful fundraiser during Pride in the Park. Running with a theme that has served us well, we are now working on the first ever "Out of Our Pantries Cookbook." Our Cookbook will feature delicious recipes from Speakout volunteers and advisory committee members, as well as local celebrity chefs who have agreed to share some of their secrets.

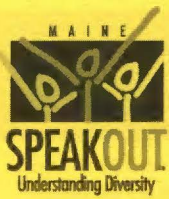
**Do you have a recipe that you want to tell the world about?** We are looking for everything from sauces to salsa and curry to candied yams. Of course, in true Speakout form, we want you to share a sentence or two about the recipe. Whether you're a serious chef or just a connoisseur of good food, Speakout needs your help to make this project a success. If are interested in serving on the Cookbook Committee, please let Pam know. Submission forms will be available in PDF format on the MSOP website or call Pam McCann at 207.874.1030 for more information. **Deadline: December 1st**



Nicole Pelletier (right), a Community Counseling Center employee, and another volunteer help out at the Pride in the Park, a fundraiser for MSOP, at Deering Oaks.







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Maine Speakout Project is a Program of  
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Counseling Center**  
*a United Way member agency*

**We Need  
Your Recipes!**  
Details Inside

The mission of the Maine Speakout Project is to create a society that is inclusive and respectful of people of differing abilities and respectful of people of differing presentations by providing opportunities for dialogue. The mission of the Maine Speakout Project is to create a society that is inclusive and respectful of people of differing abilities and respectful of people of differing presentations by providing opportunities for dialogue. The mission of the Maine Speakout Project is to create a society that is inclusive and respectful of people of differing abilities and respectful of people of differing presentations by providing opportunities for dialogue.

#### Speakouts Since June

Date	Venue
6/10	Sanford West Junior High School
6/11	Borders-South Portland
6/13	Walk With the Ones You Love
6/22	MSOP Advisory Committee Training
6/30	Sweetser-Saco Campus
7/10	Maine Coalition for Peace and Justice
7/23	University of Maine – Belfast
8/7	MSOP Speaker Training
8/13	Burdock Festival – Starks Maine
8/25	Queer Talk on WMPG
8/26	Thomas College – Waterville
8/28	Unity College Residence Life Staff
9/2	Colby College Residence Life Staff
9/3	Colby College Student Government Leaders

#### Recent Everybody Counts in the Workplace Events

Date	Venue
6/9	Hannaford
6/15	DHHS-Lewiston
6/16	DHHS-Augusta
6/18	DHHS-Portland
	DHHS-Augusta
7/27	Spurwink School – Portland
9/13	Wells Rotary Club

#### MSOP Upcoming Events

**Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>**, Transgender Day of Remembrance Event *Glickman Family Library, USM*

**Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>**, National Family Week  
“Celebrating Diverse Families” *King Middle School, Portland*

