



# MAINE LESBIAN/GAY POLITICAL ALLIANCE

Vol. 1 No. 2

September 1991

PO BOX 232

HALLOWELL ME 04347

## Referendum Update

No is not the answer the Christian Civic League wanted to hear on a referendum on gay rights. The league last month announced a petition drive to force any legislated gay issues to referendum. That effort was thwarted when an opinion from Attorney General Michael Carpenter prompted Secretary of State G William Diamond to refuse the campaign because of its questionable constitutionality.

The league announced September 4 that it was going to court to challenge Diamond's ruling and Carpenter's opinion.

MLGPA President Ed Shannon attacked the league's latest move as political opportunism. He called it "another opportunity for Wyman and the CCL to show up in the limelight appearing to be a representative of the people." Shannon characterized Wyman's court challenge as a "vain attempt to cover the embarrassment of his ill-fated, poorly-researched and unconstitutional work to bypass the powers vested in the legislature."

**continued next page**

Never throw mud. You may miss your mark.  
And you will certainly have dirty hands.

Joseph Parker

## MLGPA Has Booth At Common Ground Fair

MLGPA will have a stronger presence at the 15th Annual Common Ground Fair. From September 20-22, MLGPA will occupy new and improved space at the Windsor Fairgrounds, and with a new look.

Last year, controversy arose when the old fashioned country fair sought to eliminate the "lifestyles" section. Large numbers of gouts, political, environmental, and social action, had crowded the area. Organizers felt the agricultural aspect of the fair was being overshadowed.

In 1991, MLGPA will be located in the Political and Social Action structure, fifth on the right from the main entrance.

The Common Ground Fair offers a great opportunity for our group to educate the public about civil rights and other community concerns. Additionally, lesbians and gay men will have an opportunity to visit, meet one another, and pick up community information.

Members interested in staffing the MLGPA booth should contact Sive Neilan at 763-4161. It is an interesting experience and one which most have been comfortable and have found enjoyable.

The Common Ground Fair, September 20-22 at the Windsor Fairgrounds, Route 32, near Augusta, Fri 9-7, Sat 8-7, and Sun 8-5.

## Auburn Police Promise Sensitivity and Fairness

Following press accounts of arrests for sex in a rest area, Auburn Police Chief Roger Stricker has promised fairness in handling cases. Police cracked down on rest area sex between men earlier in the summer, resulting in a number of convictions and considerable press. Charges arose in the gay community that gays were unfairly targeted and straights were ignored.

MLGPA President Ed Shannon wrote the Auburn department urging adoption of guidelines developed by the American Civil Liberties Union, the San Francisco Police Department and the Gay & Lesbian Advocates. Over a "reasonable" period of time the escalation procedure would:

1. Make "passing calls" in police cruisers with spotlights.
2. Post signs warning of surveillance.
3. Have uniformed police give verbal warnings.
4. Have undercover police give warnings.
5. After the above steps, make arrests, using identical procedures for both homosexual and heterosexual public sex.

The department was advised to precede the escalation policy with press releases to gay press and gay sympathetic press.

The policy had been adopted earlier by the Portland Police Department following arrests in the Eastern Prom. area of the city.

In his response, Auburn Chief Stricker assured Shannon that "our approach has been one of sensitivity and mutual respect for all regardless of their sexual orientation." The Auburn Police already were using the escalation procedure. The Chief pointed to a ratio of six to one in terms of warnings to summonses.

## Frank Urges Outness

Recently, here, Massachusetts Congressman Barney Frank made the following comments on being out.

"...almost everyone has a gay or lesbian relative. It is very hard to stop loving those you love, even when they bring new and albeit potentially controversial information about themselves to the table. "However, as more and more of us build courage and with the help of our families of choice do come out, the walls of this unwarranted fear and bigotry will rot.

"Let me tell you from my own personal experience, it has been amazingly empowering. So, you might want to think about coming out sooner than you might otherwise.

**MLGPA RAFFLES OGUNQUIT  
SEE PAGE SIX—MAY BE YOURS**



## Referendum, Continued

Wyman is believed to be under pressure to perform because of his disastrous track record in recent years. Recall that fresh from his nasty "Who Put the Sex in Six" campaign to scuttle ERA, Wyman was crushed as he tried his hand at censorship. After a battering as the token Republican opponent against Senator George Mitchell, Wyman has returned to an area where he appears fixated: Homosexual Rights. Jack tells his flock that "Christian action organizations in many other states have their eyes glued on Maine to see what will happen next. Our question on homosexual rights could become a model for other states."

President Ed Shannon told Maine's press in an aggressive statement that this campaign is "another Wyman exercise in political opportunism. Money needs to be raised," he said. Perhaps anticipating Ed's comments, Wyman declared during his press conference that "Our books are open for you or anybody else." Wyman told reporters that MCCL fundraising was 40 thousand dollars ahead of last year.

### It is time to tell Jasper Wyman to stop this shameful work.

Accompanying the petition drive --perhaps its centerpiece--was a fund-raising campaign, strident in tone and full of MCCL Director Jack Wyman's bigoted hyperbole. Wyman is convinced that opposition to his referendum is politically motivated. He told his followers that Carpenter and Diamond "...are squarely on the side of homosexual activists. They are courting their votes for future statewide office." Wyman avoids mention of his own political intentions regarding a soon-to-be-vacant Senate seat in the district where he lives, nor the Blaine House which he is regarded to so passionately covet.

Ed Shannon in his press release says "it is time to look beyond this unwarranted fear he spreads, this shame he asks us to swallow and this divisiveness with which he tears our families apart. It is time to look to the health and well-being of a united and caring community of all Maine's families. It is time to tell Jasper Wyman to stop this shameful work."

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## Senator Cohen Responds To Letters

For those who wrote Washington in response to a recent mailing, you have received replies by now. We're including Senator Bill Cohen's response. He writes:

"Thank you for contacting me to express your opposition to the Helms amendment regarding HIV-infected health care workers. I appreciate the time you have taken to share your views with me.

Last Month, as you know, Senator Helms proposed an amendment to the Treasury Postal Appropriations bill which would hold health care workers who know they are infected with the AIDS virus criminally liable if they perform an "invasive" or exposure-prone procedure on a patient without first notifying that patient of their condition. While there were rumors to the contrary, the Helms amendment did not mandate imprisonment of HIV-infected health care workers, and it did not call for mandatory testing. It would also not apply in an emergency situation. As you may know, the Senate voted 81 to 18 to approve the Helms Amendment.

While far more is unknown than is known about AIDS, there is a risk—though small—of transmission between a health care worker and patient. Therefore, while I understand your concerns, I supported the Helms amendment because I believe that patients have a right to this information, and that health care workers who knowingly expose patients to risk, without first informing them of that risk, should be held accountable for their actions.

Again, thank you for contacting me, and I hope that you continue to share your views on issues of mutual concern."

Signature.

## FEDERAL RIGHTS BILL

First District Congressman Thomas Andrews is the only member of the Maine delegation to become a co-sponsor of the Federal gay rights bill. This according to an action alert put out by the Federation of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). The group urges two actions with regard to the bill.

PFLAG wants us to help document discrimination by sending your discrimination diary to their national office at PO Box 27605, Washington DC 20038.

And, you are urged to write or call your Representative and Senators and urge them to become co-sponsors.

Great advice from our parents and friends. And, we'd like a copy of their responses to share with others in the newsletter.

Rep Thomas H Andrews  
1724 Longworth House Ofc Bldg  
Washington DC 20515-1901  
1-800-445-4092

Rep Olympia J Snowe  
2464 Rayburn Bldg  
Washington DC 20515-1902  
1-800-432-1599

Sen George J Mitchell  
176 Russell Senate Ofc Bldg  
Washington DC 20510-1902  
207-874-0833

Sen William S Cohen  
322 Hart Senate Ofc Bldg  
Washington DC 20510-1901  
207-622-8414

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**Yesterday's answers  
have nothing to do  
with today's problem.**

Stu B.

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## Upcoming Meetings

Meetings (unless noted \*) are held at the All Soul's Church on King St In Augusta on the third Sunday of each month.

Meetings begin at 2 p.m. and are preceded by a social hour, usually with refreshments.

The schedule is as follows: September 15, October 20, November 17, December 15. The December 15 location will be announced later.



## Annual Retreat

I would like to congratulate and thank those who attended our annual retreat on August 17 at Lake Umbagog. On a gorgeous day amid peaceful surroundings on a beautiful lake we mixed hard work with the fun of socializing and recreation.

It was agreed by all that, despite the difficulty in making the decision to take time out of a summer weekend to attend, it was a very worthwhile and fulfilling experience. The interpersonal work done as a part of the retreat process was found to be invaluable in setting the foundation for a new level of teamwork and cooperation among members and board.

The fruits of our work at the retreat will be borne out over the next year. Watch for details of goals and issues discussed in future newsletters.

A one day weekend retreat is planned the week following our Annual Meeting and elections in order to orient new Directors. Next year we are looking to having a facilitated two-day weekend retreat during September.

Many, many thanks to John and Michael for the use of their beautiful home!

And again, congratulations and thanks to a great group of women and men who made it a powerful and worthwhile experience.

Ed Shannon

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## Need Candidates

Representative JoAnne LaPointe of district 61 (part of Auburn) has resigned her seat. A candidate sympathetic to civil rights for lesbians and gays and other progressive issues is needed for a special election to be held this fall. MLGPA asks its members to participate by suggesting candidates. Contact David Shiah of the DIRIGO Alliance at 871-7793.

We are also aware that Senator Judy Kany (a supporter) of district 17 in Waterville and Zachary Matthews (opponent) of district 13 in Winslow are not running in 1992. It is rumored that Jasper Wyman, executive director of the Christian Civic League of Maine will run for one of these two seats.

## Abortion Rights and Gay Civil Rights: Making The Connections

There has been much discussion about why choice is a bottom line issue for an organization like ours. This document from the Human Rights Campaign Fund may answer some of your questions about the relationship between choice and civil rights.

1. Both are issues of protecting privacy and individual choice in matters of reproduction and sex. The Supreme Court is attacking the constitutionally protected right of privacy in matters of reproduction and sex from two angles: limiting the right to abortion and allowing the states to control consensual, private sex. The Fourth Amendment based right to privacy penumbra is the legal underpinning for attacking sodomy laws. When this right is undermined in abortion cases, the precedent of narrowing the right to privacy is set for future sodomy and gay civil rights cases. The loss of Roe v. Wade will significantly aid the radical right in its judicial campaign to eradicate any court recognition of a constitutional right to privacy and limits government intrusion into any reproductive choices.

2. Both are issues of freedom of religious and moral decisions. It is the religious right-wing which opposes both abortion rights and lesbian and gay rights. Their opposition is grounded in their particular moral view of homosexual behavior and the act of abortion as inherently evil. This religious/moral view grants a special sacred status to monogamous, heterosexual relationships with procreation as its true purpose. No one religious viewpoint can be legally sanctioned without creating a precedent for further religious dictates. Both the choice to have an abortion and the choice to have lesbian or gay sexual relations should be based on an individual's own moral precepts and convictions, not some alleged moral majority's definitions of good and evil.

3. To put it simply, the abortion rights movement and the lesbian and gay rights movement are both about the right to control our own bodies.

4. The abortion rights movement and the lesbian and gay rights movement are both fundamentally about the right to define our families. Each issue directly impacts on an individual's right to control the composition of the unit of human beings we choose to embrace as "family."

5. Class issues arise when examining both issues. If abortions are illegal, the reality is that wealthy women will continue to pay the price for blackmarket abortions or travel to countries without restrictions. It is low-income women who are denied access to abortions or forced to find dangerous alternatives. It is the low-wage worker who faces the most serious threat of losing his job because he or she is homosexual. The wealthy can at least insulate themselves from the economic impact of gay and lesbian discrimination.

6. The value and respect granted to women in our society is reflected in both issues. The anti-choice position relegates women to a position where the quality of their own lives is less important than their ability to incubate a fetus. Women are not granted the ability to make the judgment of when they are ready and best able to take on the role of a mother.

Homophobia is clearly a reflection of misogyny in our society. To be a lesbian is to be perceived as someone who can live without a man, does not choose to be identified with men, or as against men. Lesbians are despised for the same reasons that abortion is feared. Both are a threat to the nuclear family and male dominance and control. Gay men are despised (often with even more hatred and viciousness) because they are perceived as identifying with "feminine characteristics" and women, the weaker sex to be controlled and the object of male hatred and abuse.

Again, misogyny is transferred to gay men and is increased by the fear that their sexual identity and behavior will bring down the entire system of male dominance and compulsory heterosexuality. In a society where women are valued and misogyny is eliminated, the right to abortion would rest in the woman's hands and homophobia would disappear.

7. The argument that the gay/lesbian community should oppose abortion, because, if homosexuality is caused by an "abnormal" genetic construct, "gay fetuses" will be routinely destroyed, only reinforces the counter-argument that the state should have no role in deciding whether a fetus should be aborted. As the feminist community contends, if the state has the right and power to prohibit abortion today, it will have the right and power to require abortion tomorrow. (McFeeley & Vaia)

8. Themes of violence are entwined in both issues. If women are denied access to safe and legal abortions, they will return to the days of coat hangers and back-alley butchers. Women will be left scarred and sterilized for life. Others will hemorrhage to death. The bodies of women will be once again found in bathtubs, near hospitals, and in back alleys. As long as sodomy laws remain on the books and lesbian and gay discrimination is legal, those who prey on lesbians and gays in the alleys and outside our bars will feel the imprimatur of the law as they beat, rape, mutilate, and murder. Lesbians and gay men are branded criminals and forced to hide their activities. Women who survive illegal abortions are also branded criminals and live in fear of discovery. (T.J. Anthony)



## **A Few Words About Who We Are In The Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance**

The development of "WHO WE ARE AS GAYS AND LESBIANS" in the eyes of greater Maine is taking place on a number of fronts, one of which is the on-going work of the political alliance. We have a commitment to working within the political system of the state in order to educate and lobby state government, the legislature, the governor and the public at large on issues that are important to our community's needs.

### **ML/GPA's Agenda**

- Gay and lesbian civil rights legislation
- An end to violence against gay men and lesbians
- AIDS-related advocacy
- Coalition-building with other progressive organizations
- Changing attitudes through education
- Becoming more involved in the electoral process

### **Accomplishments**

ML/GPA has actively worked for the rights of Maine lesbians and gay men in many ways:

By continuing our vigorous effort to add the category "sexual orientation" to the Maine Human Rights Act.

By assertively working with state officials on AIDS-related policies and programs to protect the interests of the gay and lesbian community.

By successfully formulating and lobbying for bills to establish written consent for HIV antibody testing, ensure confidentiality, protect against discrimination in insurance, and to provide funding for AIDS education.

By successfully creating a coalition of progressive organizations to write, lobby and pass legislation to protect all individuals from harassment and hate crimes.

By increasing the visibility of gay and lesbian people and issues in the media.

By establishing working ties with national gay and lesbian organizations and groups in other states.

### **HOW CAN YOU HELP IN THE WORK TO ACQUIRE CIVIL RIGHTS?**

If you are not part of our efforts and want to be, you may attend our monthly meetings which are open to all members. If you are not a member, you may join ML/GPA by completing the application for membership which is included in this newsletter.

Your membership gives you...

- a voice in a successful organization working to improve the lives of all lesbians and gay men in Maine.
- a chance to meet and work with lesbians and gay men from all over Maine
- regular mailings keeping you up-to-date on issues of concern to you
- the opportunity to learn new interpersonal skills as part of lobbying efforts.

## **Wilde-Stein Homecoming**

The University of Maine's Wilde-Stein Club—the gay student organization-- has announced homecoming activities for the big October weekend.

GALA-UMAINE was formed in 1989 to provide a social and educational network among gay lesbian and bisexual alums of the University of Maine.

### **Schedule of Events**

Ram's Horn, UM Campus  
10 a.m.-12 N Meeting/Elections  
12N-5 p.m. Visit time/Films  
5 p.m.-7 p.m. Pre-dinner reception  
7 p.m.-8 p.m. Spaghetti dinner  
8 p.m.-9 p.m. Evening Program  
For more information contact:  
Mike Stickney (207) 774-0712  
Doug Dunton (207) 775-7948

## **Unpleasant Facts**

The front page news about the referendum campaign of the civic league brings home an unpleasant truth. Homosexuals help raise money. Big money. Jack Wyman told reporters that his outfit's money is running 40 thousand dollars ahead of last year. He is using us to bring in that money by the bucketsfull.

Ed Shannon made no such announcement. The painful truth is that this community has so many places to send its dollars that organizational budgets get worn thin.

Jack Wyman may be the salesperson we need. Take a look at the top line of the label on your newsletter envelope. If the expiration date is earlier than the current year and month (91-09), it means it has been more than a year since you sent us a check.

The final unpleasant fact is, that without your financial support in addition to your moral support, we're going to be hard-pressed to keep the hounds of bigotry at bay.

### **Thank You for Helping!**

Expiration Date		
House District		
Senate District		
92-09	116	10
Your Name Partner's Name		
Address		
City State Zip		

**The person who makes no mistakes does not usually make anything.**

**Edward Phelps**



From John E. Fortunato's, *Embracing the Exile*.

A conversation with his creator:

John: "How can being gay and being in love be wrong?"

God smiled and said quietly:

"How can love be wrong? It all comes from me. I made you whole. You are one as I am. You are my son. Nothing can separate you from my love. I have given you gifts, share them. I've given you light! Brighten the world. I empower you with my love. Love then."

John: "But they call my light darkness, my gift corruption."

God said - with a voice filled with compassion, a voice that enveloped me with love:

"Love them anyway"

He said,

"Love them anyway."

John: "But how?"

God said:

"You begin by just being who you are - a loving caring whole person, created in my image, whose special light of love happens to shine on men, as I intended for you.

You must also speak your pain and affirm the wholeness I've made you to be when they assail it. You must protest when you are treated as less than a child of mine.

Teach them that the world of their imagining is not the world I have made. All creation is one, and that all I create I redeem."

John: "But they will persecute me, destroy me."

God said:

"O yes - I know. How well I know."

Then two strong motherly arms reached out and drew me close to the bosom of all that is. And I was just there. Just being. Enveloped in being.

And we wept -

for joy.

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### Officers and Board

President Ed Shannon, Ogunquit 646-4872; Vice-President Sive Neilan, Union 763-4161; Treasurer Connie Roy, Warren 273-3316; Secretary Harry Gordon, Bangor 942-3901; Board: Marion Anderson, Auburn 786-4585; Rita Clifford, Windham 892-6136; Diane Elze, Cape Elizabeth 799-6905; Larry Godfrey, S Thomaston 594-2957; Elinor Goldberg, Union 763-3838; Robert Gordon, S Portland 871-1014; Allen LaPan, Augusta 622-2245; Mark Letizia, Penobscot 469-3409; Jim Michaud, Bath 443-2557; F E Pentlarge, Hallowell 623-2349; Dan Stevens, Augusta 622-6631; Barbara Wood, Portland 871-1555.

Officers and Board Members serve until the Annual Meeting in February. If you have questions or need information, contact the Board Member living nearest you for assistance.

**It's Easier to Thump a  
Faggot than an Average  
Joe. Who Cares?**

L.A. Police Officer

### HRCF Studies Political Campaigns

Does support for lesbian and gay rights help or hurt a political candidate? That's the question a new Human Rights Campaign Fund study hopes to answer. The study, funded by the Triangle Institute, will examine electoral results from around the US on federal, state and national levels.

Following release of a similar study in 1980, the Democratic National Convention first adopted a gay rights plank in its platform.

The new study will chart the challenges and advances made by the movement during the past decade. AIDS and its impact on politics will be included.

Researchers will document instances when candidates' support for gay and lesbian issues was raised in a hostile way, and how campaign strategists responded. The effectiveness of gay and lesbian community support for candidates also will be studied.

Anecdotes, stories and examples from campaigns throughout the country will insure that the study is comprehensive. Any individuals with information to share for the study should contact Eric Rosenthal at HRCF, 1012 14th St NW, Suite 607, Washington DC 20005.



### DIRIGO Dinner

MLGPA coalition partner DIRIGO Alliance will hold its Annual Dinner on Saturday, November 2. For information: DIRIGO Alliance, PO Box 17534, Portland ME 04101, or 871-7793.



## Obituary Policy Action

The obituary policy of the Portland papers has come under attack. The papers limit the list of survivors to legal or blood relatives.

Criticism arose when the papers refused to include the name of a lover in the obituary of a man who died from AIDS. A letter to the editor from Portland Physician Owen Pickus built a solid argument against the practice, but brought only the limp reply that the policy was predicated on "purposes of space and consistent administration." A petition drive is underway in the Portland area against the policy of excluding the names of unmarried partners. You can participate by writing: Letters to The Editor, Portland Press Herald, 390 Congress St, Portland ME 04101.

## MLGPA Joins Taxation

Taxes will soon be on all our minds as we feel the slimfast effect a tax surcharge will have on our purses. For that and other reasons, MLGPA has become a member of the Coalition for Fair Taxation.

The coalition was formed to develop ongoing rational proposals for the handling of a budget that will meet the needs of all. Hopefully, the coalition could become an important influence upon the Legislature and avoid the budget embarrassment suffered during the past session of the 115th.

More than 30 statewide political action organizations have joined in this important coalition. If you have an interest in participating, contact David Shiah 871-7793.

## So...Do They Know About You At Work?

We work at Loring Air Force Base, LL Bean and UNUM. We're guidance counselors, accountants and sales reps. And sure, some of the men are florists and some of the women drive trucks for a living.

Our jobs provide income. They also provide our identity, more strongly for some of us than for others. If we're closeted on the job, and the majority of us are at least to some degree, our job may be a 40 hour-a-week reminder that we are not always free to be who we are. Or are we?

While we lobby our legislators to finally protect us from job discrimination, we can do wonders to educate our co-workers about our lives by coming out on the job.

At a workshop at Symposium XVIII held this year at the University of Southern Maine, about 30 answered the question: "So...Do They Know About You At Work?"

At the workshop we learned that although many of us are more out at work than others, we all would like to take our next step. By sharing our situations, we inspired one another. We answered questions like: "Do I want my partner on my benefit plan?", and we wondered if we could be truthful when asked, "So what did you do this weekend?"

For those of us who could use a list of good reasons to come out on the job, the following may help. The participants of the Symposium workshop came up with eight. Can you come up with more?

1. You can feel more honest.
2. You won't have to worry any more that they will find out.
3. You will hear fewer gay jokes—in your presence.
4. You will have most co-workers feeling good that you could trust them.
5. They won't fix you up with co-workers (opposite sex) any more.
6. You will be a role model for closeted workers.
7. You could bring your partner or a same-sex date to the company picnic.
8. Your partner could receive the same benefits given to other workers spouses.

Bob Gordon

## Win a Holiday in Ogunquit

A three day and night Columbus Day weekend at beautiful Perkins Cove could be yours. That, and Sunday Brunch, too.

To win this incredible weekend all you need do is send in your name with a check for the number of entries you wish. And, each entry is only **two dollars**. Specials are being offered, too. Take three entries for five dollars. Get **seven for ten!** Add your support to **MLGPA!**

There are no tickets to carry around either. Send the coupon below and your check. Your entries will be put into the drum with all the other contestants until the drawing on October 2. That's the day you get the call announcing **YOU ARE THE WINNER!**

**Make your entries right away and make this weekend yours!**

Entries made based on amount enclosed. Letters postmarked after October 1 not eligible. Drawing will be made in Hallowell on October 2. Proceeds benefit MLGPA.

### MLGPA Ogunquit Getaway Weekend

Sign Me Up

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I want \_\_\_\_\_ Chances to win. A check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Clip and Mail to **MLGPA Getaway**, PO Box 232, Hallowell ME 04347