



COMMUNIQUE

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GAY-LESBIAN PHONELINE/TÉLÉGI - 207 498-2088

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(please note: last month's issue was incorrectly numbered Volume 10: 9 - it should have been number 2)

EFFORT BEGINS IN PASSAGE OF RIGHTS BILL IN MAINE

For the past decade, a bill to amend the Maine Human Rights Act has been introduced in the Maine Legislature, and this year is no different. The Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance is spearheading this campaign to pass a "gay-lesbian civil rights bill" which will protect gay people from discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodation, and credit. What's different this year about the bill is that it exempts religious institutions. This issue, which has been a stumbling block in years past, will not exist this time; people closely involved in the effort to pass this bill feel that exempting religious institutions will take the air out of some legislators' reasons for voting against the legislation. The Maine Human Rights Commission is the primary sponsor of this bill, and is responsible for finding members of the Maine House and Senate to sponsor the bill. This year's legislature includes two active members of the Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance, including Susan Farnsworth, an attorney and open lesbian, the first in the Maine Legislature.

In Aroostook County, with 12 Representatives and three Senators, the lobbying effort will begin in earnest in March. Two years ago, in the last legislative session (Maine's legislative sessions are two years in length) two Representatives voted in favor of the bill, Judy Paradis from Frenchville, and Carolyn Mahany from Easton. In the previous session, all 12 Representatives opposed the bill, but all three Senators (Paul Violette - Van Buren, Jim McBreairty - Perham, and Mike Carpenter - Houlton) voted "yes". This year's Aroostook Delegation includes two new members, Wilfred Bell (Caribou) and Nason Graham (Houlton); Paradis and Mahany were re-elected; Violette, McBreairty, and Carpenter are no longer in the Senate. They were succeeded two years ago by Ray Theriault (Fort Kent), Donald Collins (Caribou), and Margaret Ludwig (Houlton).

A special mailing to all Lambs residing in Aroostook County will go out in March, notifying you of the organizing efforts to date, and detailing how you can lobby your legislators. A meeting (or meetings) will be planned so that our legislators can meet with us to discuss their concerns about the bill. When Lambda members met several years ago with Senator McBreairty, it was felt that giving him the opportunity to ask questions and realize that we were just "regular" people was instrumental in his support of the bill that year.

DISCRIMINATION: OUVRAGE CHOC (le Magazine RG, Montréal)

Discrimination et Commission des Droits de la Personnes, un ouvrage rédigé conjointement par Me Andrée Côté et Me Lucie Lemonde et publié par les Editions Saint-Martin, examine 174 dossiers de harcèlement sexuel, d'orientation sexuelle, de discrimination raciale et de condition sociale sur lesquels la CDP a

L rendu une décision en 1985 et 1986.

"S'adresser à la CDP, c'est comme donner un coup d'épée dans l'eau" affirmait le journaliste Louis Falardeau dans LA PRESSE récemment à propos de données de ce livre. En effet, sur 174 dossiers, huit seulement ont été jugés fondés et un seul amené devant les tribunaux. Les autres ont été éliminés fautes de preuves, ou parce que la commission ne les jugeait pas de son ressort, ou encore parce qu'ils ont été l'objet de désistements ou de règlements à l'amiable. En matière d'orientation sexuelle, aucun règlement n'a obtenu un montant d'argent quelconque!!! Un ouvrage à lire si vous voulez en savoir davantage sur les taxes que vous payez pour faire respecter vos droits et libertés!!

GAY COUPLE CHALLENGES PENSION BENEFITS (GO Info, Ottawa)

In September 1986, Jim Egan of Courtenay, British Columbia turned 65, and began to receive his "old age pension"; the following June, his partner of 40 years, Jack Nesbit, turned 60 years old. According to Canada Health and Welfare, any pensioner age 65 or older would receive a special benefit if his or her legal or common law spouse were 60, and their combined incomes were less than \$16,000. "I made the application for the spousal allowance and went through all legal channels," says Egan. "They said, 'No, you can't have it. You are not a common law couple in the definition of the terms of the Old Age Security Act'.

"When I got the pension I could have gone down to the local senior's lounge, struck up an acquaintance with a 60-year-old woman who had little or no money, and said, 'What do you say you and I pretend we're a common law couple? We'll get the spousal allowance and scoop the loot!' But Jack and I, who have been together for 40 years, are not entitled to it, which strikes me to be a great injustice."

Egan and Nesbit are challenging the ruling, hoping to show that Section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms gives protection on the basis of sexual orientation. An irony of the story is that Egan and Nesbit have qualified for legal aid funding from the Court Challenges Program; in essence, the federal government has agreed to fund Egan and Nesbitt to whatever degree necessary to prove that the federal government itself has refused them benefits solely on the grounds that they are a gay couple; the government is paying to sue itself.

IN BRIEF - EN DEUX MOTS

- SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI - The US Court of Appeals ruled that the University of Arkansas cannot discriminate against its Gay and Lesbian Student Organization when awarding student activities funds.
- LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA - Actress Whoopi Goldberg, in an interview in *The Advocate*, said people frequently ask her if she's a lesbian, and why she agreed to be a keynote speaker at the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights in 1987. "I say, 'Normally, this would be none of your business; however, I will answer you.' It's possible. I'm not practising at the moment, but I will not say it will never happen or it hasn't happened in my past."
- LES MARITIMES - La conférence des Maritimes de l'Eglise baptiste uni a officiellement interdit aux homosexuels de devenir pasteurs. En effet, une forte majorité d'un groupe d'environ 1000 délégués des provinces maritimes a voté dernièrement en faveur d'un règlement stipulant que "les personnes pratiquant l'homosexualité et connues comme telles (incluant les lesbiennes) ne seront pas admissibles aux examens d'ordination". Cette décision est survenue exactement deux jour après la décision contraire de l'Eglise une du Canada. Un pasteur, parlant de l'homosexualité comme d'un péché, a déclaré qu'il n'y avait pas de raison pour que celle-ci soit traitée différemment de l'adultère, de la pédophilie ou même de la gourmandise.

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- BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS - "I don't think the church has been as inclusive of gay and lesbian people as it might have been," said Bishop Barbara C. Harris, the first woman consecrated as a bishop in the Episcopal Church of the United States.
 - DENVER, COLORADO - At their biannual meeting, the delegates at the American Bar Association voted 251-121 to approve a "Gay Rights Resolution", which encourages federal, state, and local governments to enact legislation prohibiting discrimination against lesbians and gaymen in employment, housing, and public accommodations. Approximately one-half of the lawyers in the US or 350,000 are members of the ABA.
 - PORTLAND, MAINE - Members of this city's gay and lesbian community plus other minority groups have designed a task force to meet regularly with the Portland Chief of Police and other officials to monitor hate crimes in the city. The task force, composed of Blacks, Jews, Asians, disabled, and lesbians and gaymen, was prompted by an informal meeting which took place in November between police and activists from the gay-lesbian community, a meeting which was held after the gay-bashing of two Portland men. The goal of the task force is primarily to establish a working relationship between Portland's minority groups and the police, and to explore the extent of hate crimes and the police response to them.
 - NEW YORK CITY - Just days after the New York City Human Rights Commission announced its intention to proceed with a public hearing against NYNEX, the Yellow Pages publisher in New York and New England, the company agreed to restructure the subheadings in the directories to include lesbian and gay groups. The decision, which will affect the Aroostook County telephone book, means that the major yellow pages heading "Social Service Organizations", under which the NLN Gay-Lesbian Phoneline is now listed, will have a special subheading for "Gay & Lesbian Organizations".
 - MONTRÉAL, QUÉBEC - Un groupe d'Acadiens se préparent pour représenter l'Acadie aux Jeux Gais III à Vancouver du 4-11 août 1990. L'Acadie était représentée aux jeux de San Francisco de 1986. On demande des athlètes et supporters, femmes et hommes de partout ou qu'ils soient dans les disciplines suivantes: arts martiaux, badminton, ballon-panier, billard, culturisme, quilles, croquet, curling, cyclisme, équitation, football, golf, haltérophilie, hockey, lutte, marathon, marche olympique, natation, piste et pelouse, plongeon, raquetball, soccer, softball, squash, tennis, et volley-ball. Homme et femme, jeunes et moins jeunes, communiquez à: CP 883, Succ C, Montréal H2L 4L6.
 - CARIBOU, MAINE - Planners for the state's 16th annual conference, the Maine Lesbian and Gaymen's Symposium XVI, have already made arrangements for participation by the following:
 - * Keynote speakers - SVEND ROBINSON, openly-gay member of the Canadian Parliament, and MARGARET CERULLIO - professor of Social Sciences at Hampshire College in Massachusetts and one of the keynote speakers at the 1987 March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights
 - * Slide-lecture presenters - ROBERTA YUSBA, from San Francisco, discussing "Lesbian Pulp Novels, 1950-1965", and WILL ROSCOE, from San Francisco, whose topic is "Zuni Man-Woman", discussing the 'berdache' Native Americans, where men took the roles of women, and women the roles of men in the tribes
 - * Saturday night's entertainment - TEN PERCENT REVUE, a professional cabaret entertainment group featuring 3 lesbians and 3 gaymen, who have performed in Boston, Provincetown, and Off-Broadway New York City
 - * Sunday night special - DAVE LAVOIE with PHIL LOCKE & THE MARSH ISLAND BAND playing for a Contra Dance. Symposium dates are Friday-Monday, May 26-29, 1989 at the University of Maine/Presque Isle campus. Pre-registration forms will be mailed in mid-March; reservations for housing and meals must be received by April 24th.

NLN Communique
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**"I gave my lover everything,
including AIDS."**

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QUESTIONS?

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1-800/561-4009 (N-B)

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NORTHERN LAMBDA NORD (NLN) CP/POB 990,

Caribou, Maine 04736 USA, Gay-Lesbian

Phoneline/Telegai - 207/498-2088

AROOSTOOK AREA GAY/LESBIAN AA GROUP meets weekly in Madawaska; contact Northern Lambda Nord for information

BANGOR AREA GAY-LESBIAN-STRAIGHT COALITION (BAGLSC - "Bagels") c/o 87 Sunset Strip, Brewer 04412

CLUB EQUALITY private membership club/membre privé, located downstairs from the Capricorn Club/au-dessous du Club Capricorn, rear entrance/entrée arrière, Main Street/rue Principale, Sainte-Anne-de-Madawaska, New/Nouveau-Brunswick; open Friday-Saturday-Sunday, 9pm-2am (N-B time)/ouvert vendredi-samedi-dimanche, 21h00-2h00 (heure N-B)

DOWNEAST LESBIAN GAY ORGANIZATION (DELGO) c/o Unitarian Church, 126 Union Street, Bangor 04401, 207/942-6503

DIGNITY/MAINE Catholic group, POB 8113, Portland 04104

FREDERICTON LESBIANS AND GAYS (FLAG) POB 1556, Station A, Fredericton E3B 5G2, 506/457-2156

GAIS ET LESBIENNES DE MONCTON/GAYS AND LESBIANS OF MONCTON (GLM) CP/POB 7102, Riverview E1B 1V0, 506/858-1013

GAY/LESBIAN ALLIANCE University of Southern Maine, 92 Bedford Street, Portland 04102, 207/780-4085

GROUPE GAIE DE L'UNIVERSITE LAVAL (IGGL) CP 2500, Pavillon Lemieux, Cite Universitaire, Sainte-Foy, Quebec G1K 7P4, 418/648-2751

HARBOR MASTERS, INC. leather-levi group, POB 4044, Portland 04104

LESBIAN/GAY COMMITTEE, MAINE CHAPTER,

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

POB 5112, Station A, Portland 04101

MAINE BISEXUAL PEOPLE'S NETWORK POB 1792,

Portland 04104, 207/780-4085 (leave message)

MAINE LESBIAN FEMINISTS PC3 125, Belfast 04915

MAINE LESBIAN/GAY POLITICAL ALLIANCE POB 232, Hallowell 04347

NEW BRUNSWICK COALITION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

REFORM/LA COALITION POUR LA REFORME DES

DROITS DE LA PERSONNE DU NOUVEAU-

BRUNSWICK POB/CP 1556, Station Succursale A,

Fredericton E3B 5G2

OUR PAPER: A Voice for Lesbians and Gaymen in

Maine published monthly, \$12 for one-year subscription,

POB 10744, Portland 04104

OUTRIGHT: Portland Alliance of Gay & Lesbian Youth

POB 5028, Station A, Portland 04101

WILDE-STEIN CLUB Memorial Union, University of

Maine, Orono 04469

WOMLAND TRUST Womn Owning Maine Land Trust,

POB 55, Troy 04987

AIDS information SIDA

MAINE AIDS-line 1-800/851-AIDS (1-2437) (Portland -

775-1267), Monday-Friday 9am-5pm, Monday &

Wednesday 6-9pm, Saturday 10am-1pm

NEW BRUNSWICK AIDS-line/La ligne SIDA

NOUVEAU-BRUNSWICK 1-800/561-4009 (Fredericton -

459-7518)

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