

The Networker

Publication of the Gay/Lesbian Community Network

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Fired In The USA If You're Gay

Special Agent Frank Buttino was rewarded for 20 years of service to the FBI in July of 1989. In September 1989, Special Agent Buttino was forced to turn in his badge and gun. The Bureau had discovered that Buttino is gay.

Joe Steffan, a student at the US Naval Academy was discharged when authorities at the Academy learned he is gay. Steffan was a top student at the Academy.

Both men have sued the government. It is interesting to note that US government attitudes toward gay and lesbian people in the service are quite similar to attitudes toward Black individuals in the service in the 1940's. Newsweek magazine states that, yearly, the military discharges 1400 servicemen and women because of their sexual orientation.

It is worth mentioning that recent studies by the military have indicated that "men and women of atypical sexual orientation can function appropriately in military units." A report a year later (1989) stated that regarding suitability for military duty, gays are "as good or better than the average heterosexual." Vice Admiral Joseph Donnell stated that lesbian sailors are "among the command's top performers." The admiral went on to say that work to remove lesbians and gay men from military service should continue.

It is possible that Buttino and Steffan may be reinstated. For the most part, however, appeals courts have been unwilling to overturn government policies on homosexuality.

Leonard Matlovich received a Purple Heart for valor during the Vietnam War. Before his death from AIDS in 1988, Matlovich wrote his epitaph: When I was in the military, they gave me a medal for killing two men--and a discharge for loving one."

From : Newsweek, January 14, 1991 "Under Cover, in the Closet"

Special Notice:

SWF (**S**leek **W**hite **F**eline) looking for a new home. My name is Jasmine. I'm a two and a half year old neutered male, vaccinated, healthy, and incredibly handsome. I'm very gentle and affectionate. I love to eat, sleep and go outdoors so I would prefer a country setting (or at least a large yard). My present housekeeper is very sad to let me go, but she is moving to a home where I would not be welcome, and she wants me to be adopted by someone who will love me and spoil me. Please call 223-5156 for an appointment to meet me.



What Does This War Mean to Us?

An Opinion

by Robin Gorsline

I will make my bias clear at the beginning. I believe Bush's war in the Middle East is wrong. We don't need to be fighting and losing lives for oil nor to stop "naked aggression" (ever wonder about 'clothed aggression').

Nor am I thrilled to be helping to restore the misogynist, feudal monarchy in Kuwait and to maintain the same thing in Saudi Arabia. Finally, there are other ways to resolve conflict -- which it seems patently obvious to me our government was unwilling to consider from August 2 forward.

Moreover, I think there are some special reasons for gay men, lesbians and bisexuals to oppose this war. First, although I love this country, I am not convinced that we are exactly the land of milk and honey. Our democracy still excludes people Jesse Helms does not like (gay men, lesbians and bisexuals, for example) in some very significant ways. What about the thousands -- nay, tens of thousands -- of gay, lesbian and bisexual people in the armed forces who can get booted out simply for being 'that way?' NPR had a report the other day which said gays and lesbians were being 'allowed' to go the front but no promises were being made about their status after the war (the ones who survive, that is) How about winning a Purple Heart and a Dishonorable Discharge at the same time?

Further, while I don't have any illusions that if the war ended today we'd see dramatically increased funding for social programs, I also believe that this war is taking money and attention from AIDS research, care and prevention, not to mention other health care needs (such as infant mortality and breast cancer screening and treatment), education, housing and environmental protection.

Finally, I remember that the same people who bring us patriarchy bring us this war and all the other 'conflicts' and 'invasions to restore democracy' (see Panama, Grenada, etc.) this country (and our allies) have provided for our entertainment.

Oh, yes, speaking of entertainment, there are the media: those folks who have so much trouble mentioning us on the air, but are able to bring us "Saturday Night at the War" (and every other night, too). The one thing I can say for NBC -- which is the network on where I live -- is that Arthur Kent is really dashing. I could spend some time in the desert with him!

You may not agree with me. But if you do, how about calling me where I work these days -- the Peace & Justice Center of Eastern Maine -- and offering to help a large number of peace/anti-war, progressive activists oppose this war. The number is 942-9343. We also can talk about Arthur Kent ... or your favorite, too.

First Gay Youth Group in Bangor: A Response
by Ryan

I want to begin by telling Robin and the other adult members: thanks for getting the group going!

I feel as a member of the group that we young gays are going to be happier meeting others through the group. I also think it will be a healthier way, too.

The first group went great. I was glad there were so many understanding people. I came home feeling great, especially because I had met some people close to my own age there. The group definitely will become a hit in the next few months. I know it will be easier for us who have come out.

Thanks!

Youth Group Is Now Meeting

The group for gay, lesbian and bisexual youth (up to age 22) has met four times since the last NETWORKER and is going well. The group is meeting on Tuesdays, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m., at the Peace & Justice Center, 9 Central Street, Bangor (third floor above old Mr. Paperback).

The energy of the young people is wonderful, and the adult advisors are having fun, too! The average attendance of young people has been seven. Our discussions have been lively! The youth are in awe that advisor Jeanne C. has been a lesbian for so long (and how long is that, Jeanne?) and that advisor Robin G. waited so long to come out (and how long was that, Robin?). All the advisors are impressed with the wisdom and courage already displayed by the youth.

The group is about to choose a name from many excellent suggestions generated at meetings.

Originally the advisors thought bi-weekly meetings would be appropriate, and perhaps all they could manage. However, at the first meeting the young people present asked for weekly meetings, at least during the formative stages of the group. We could keep that schedule (which is the most ideal) if we had additional advisors -- especially other men to help Robin -- so that advisors could take some time off. If you can help or want additional information, please call Robin Gorsline at 866-7958.

The group also could use financial help to pay for refreshments, buy materials, etc. Send your contributions to GLCN (marked "Youth"), P.O. Box 212, Bangor, ME 04401.

And please tell young people you know that there is a place for them!

The Community's Calendar

- Tues. Feb.12: Caregiver's Support Group Downeast AIDS Network 114 State St. Ellsworth,ME 667-3506 or 422-3686 for info.
- Tues. Feb. 12: Youth Group Meeting 7:30-9:00pm, Peace and Justice Center, 9 Central St. Bangor. **Youth Group Meets Each Tuesday.
- Wed. Feb 13: GLCN Support Group 7:30pm Peace and Justice Center 9 Central St. Bangor.
- Fri.& Sat Feb 15&16: Spiritual Paths to Peace, University of Maine, for more information call 581-1731.
- Sat. Feb 16: GLCN Valetine's Dance, Chemical Free, 8:30pm - 1:00am University College, Bangor. ****See flyer for directions**
- Mon. Feb. 18: WHFN Radio 89.3 FM,15 min. interview with GLCN member aired at 11:30am & 7:30pm
- Wed. Feb 20: GLCN Political/Educational Meeting, 7:30pm Peace and Justice Center, 9 Central St. Bangor.
- Thurs. Feb 21: Women's HIV Support Group 7pm-8pm, Meeting in Bangor, Call 947-0700, 667-3506 or 469-6405 for info.
- Sun. Feb 24: Lesbian and Gay Film Festival Benefit "Cut-A-Thon"(get a haircut to benefit the film festival at Amore Salon, Portland, call 774-1774 for appointment)
- Sun. Feb. 24: Lesbian Brunch, 11:30am-2:00pm, Peace and Justice Center 9 Central St. Bangor.Call 862-5907 for more info.
- Tues. Feb. 26: Caregiver's Support Group, Down East AIDS Network, 7:30-9:00pm. 114 State St. Ellsworth call - 667-3506,422-3686
- Wed. Feb 27: General Meeting GLCN 7:30, Peace and Justice Center 9 Central St. Bangor
- Wed. March 6: Newsletter folding, stapling, addressing etc,etc, all welcome, 7:30pm, Peace and Justice Center 9 Central Street, Bangor.
- Sat. April 27: AIDS Action and Activism, 1 day conference at University of Maine, Farmington, sponsored by Gay and Straight People's Political Alliance, \$10.00/person, space limited, call 453-4075 for more information.

Networker Classifieds

Female Roommate wanted to share 2 bedroom house in Orono. Rent \$225.00 plus utilities and heat. Call Jane, evenings, at 866-7210

Clip and mail

Networker Subscription Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

\$5.00 for 1 year of the Networker. Mail to GLCN P.O. Box 212
Bangor, Maine 04401