

# MLGPA News

Politics, Education, Outreach

P.O. Box 232, Hallowell, ME 04347-0232

April 1998

## MLGPA Seeks to Build Community Through Regional Meetings

Since February 10 people across the state of Maine, both within and outside the LGBT community, have pondered what to do next. How will we go about attaining civil rights protection for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered citizens? What are the options — a legislative bill? a citizen-initiated referendum? a legal challenge of some kind?

In an effort to gather information and build a broader and stronger statewide LGBT community, MLGPA is hosting regional community meetings across the state. The goal of these meetings is to talk about how we can network more effectively, where we go from here, and how we get there. Our community is filled with knowledgeable, experienced, and committed individuals, all of whom have valuable ideas about where to go next. We believe that the only real way to learn from everyone is to meet in local communities and listen.

The meetings are being facilitated by Diane Gilman and Howard Solomon of the Maine Chapter of the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI). Both have many years of extensive experience facilitating and building coalitions throughout Maine and New England. MLGPA is excited to have their support for such important and valuable community events. (For more information on NCBI call 882-8022).

Once we have completed this series of meetings, we will compile the information we have gathered and share it with everyone. We will print our findings in the newsletter and distribute it as widely as possible. Depending on the results and the interest and commitment expressed by participants, we may host a second round of meetings to begin implementing some of the ideas generated.

We encourage everyone to attend these meetings, including our straight allies. Building community

means establishing networks and providing forums by which everyone can participate in the processes of planning and decision making. At the first two meetings (Ogunquit and Portland) several straight allies attended, expressing their desire to become more involved and to get their friends more involved. Feeling disappointed at the results on February 10, they found these meetings to be the first opportunity to connect with the community, share their thoughts, and recommit to the battle for civil rights.

Our series of community meetings began in Ogunquit on March 8. The second was held in Portland on March 16. The remainder of the meetings, confirmed thus far, are:

- ▼ **Augusta**, Saturday, April 4, 10am–12noon, UU Church, Winthrop Street
- ▼ **Belfast**, Saturday, April 25, 10am–12noon, Belfast Free Library, High Street
- ▼ **Ellsworth**, Saturday, May 9, 10am–1pm, UU Church
- ▼ **Bangor**, Saturday, May 9, 4–6pm, location TBA
- ▼ **Caribou**, Sunday, May 17, time and location TBA
- ▼ **Lewiston** (tentative), Saturday, May 30, time and location TBA

For more information or directions to the meetings, please call the MLGPA office at 1-800-55MLGPA or e-mail us at [MLGPA@javanet.com](mailto:MLGPA@javanet.com).

### Remember:

All MLGPA Members are welcome to attend Board and Committee Meetings. See Page 4 for a list of times and places.

# MLGPA

**Politics, Education,  
Outreach**

## **Executive Committee:**

Betsy Smith  
*President*

Dan Stevens  
*Vice President*

Thomas A. Little, C.P.A.  
*Treasurer*

Tom Coffin  
*Recording Secretary*

Judy Edgerly

Julie Rothrock

Susan Sparaco

Del Wilson

## **Board Members:**

Harold Booth

David Garrity

Jennifer Goldman

Celeste Gosselin

Rick Gowen

Sara Hanna

Brian Kaufman

P.J. Mears

Teague Morris

David Rappoport

Erik Richard

Mark Sullivan

## **Executive Volunteers:**

Maggie Allen

Kate McLaughlin

Sam Sherman

## **Mailing Address:**

PO Box 232  
Hallowell, ME 04347-0232

## **e-mail:**

mlgpa@javanet.com

## **Office Telephone:**

1-800-556-5472  
761-3732 (in Portland)

## *A word from the president...*

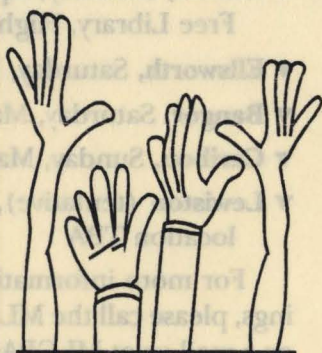
Now that February 10 has come and gone and life seems to be somewhat back to normal, I am a bit overwhelmed at the work which lies ahead. I am a firm believer that progress is two steps forward, one step back — but having to go back to the drawing board so soon is not exactly my idea of fun. (I was rather looking forward to those weekends of leisure!)

Nevertheless, to the drawing board we go, and we hope our friends and supporters will join us. One thing that seemed to surface during the campaign was a sense of a divided community. Though not unusual for a campaign where resources are stretched, nerves are tight, and people are short on sleep, it is not the way we should operate on a daily basis.

If you have read about our regional community meetings, I encourage all of you to attend at least one. This is an opportunity for you to tell us what has worked in your community, what might work on a statewide level in the future, and what commitment you can make to the effort in the near future. I believe that in the next 2-3 years we will build, grow, and unify until we culminate in a thrilling victory at the polls. It will truly be a time of celebration for the LGBT community and you shouldn't miss the opportunity to be involved.

Consider joining the MLGPA Board of Directors and play an important role as we march into the millennium. Elections are held at the annual meeting in September, but it is never too early to start attending Board meetings and getting involved. We meet the third Thursday of each month, 6-9 pm, at the Maine Education Association in Augusta.

In solidarity,  
Betsy Smith



## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Volunteers are always needed at MLGPA. We have mailings to prepare, letters to write, events to plan, programs to implement, committees to sit on, meetings to attend, coalitions to build. The list is endless.

If you would like to get involved, please contact us:

call us at: 1-800-55-MLGPA or  
761-3732 in Portland

e-mail us at: mlgpa@javanet.com

write us at: PO Box 232  
Hallowell, ME  
04347-0232

# Interest Growing in Maine Diversity Alliance

Since we first announced the establishment of our new non-profit education and outreach organization, the Maine Diversity Alliance, interest has been growing by leaps and bounds. Several individuals in the community have already come forward to help us determine the direction and future of the Alliance. With the sky as the limit we can make this organization whatever it should be to fulfill the needs of education, outreach, community building, grassroots organizing, and community services.

To date, the activities planned for the Maine Diversity Alliance are as follows:

- ▼ Statewide hate crimes prevention program.
- ▼ Toll-free voice mail resource service, providing access to support, advocacy, entertainment, legal, legislative, and networking information.
- ▼ Comprehensive resource booklet with all known gay and gay-friendly services available in the state of Maine.
- ▼ Speaking panel to visit organizations, schools, churches, government agencies, and other groups who request more information on LGBT issues.
- ▼ Financial scholarships to two graduating Maine high school seniors.
- ▼ Annual Awards Banquet to honor community service within the LGBT movement.

If you would like to be involved with the Maine Diversity Alliance, let us know. Please contact Betsy at 851-3741 (voicemail), or by e-mail (smittybj@aol.com).

## Legislative Updates

### Corporate Accountability Bill

Please support LD 2243, a bill on Corporate Accountability. Senate Majority Leader Chellie Pingree has introduced the bill, which is designed to improve the rate of return on large taxpayer investments by: —requiring more disclosure & public participation in the subsidy application process —insisting that aid recipients act as responsible corporate citizens —authorizing state and local governments to recapture their investments, if warranted —creating a public commission to oversee the corporate subsidy process

Call your legislator and determine his or her position on the issue. For more information call Dirigo Alliance (874-9668) or the Maine Women's Lobby (622-0851).

### Increase in Minimum Wage

The Maine Legislature recently voted to increase the minimum wage. LD 568 would raise the minimum wage by 25 cents, from \$5.15 per hour to \$5.40 per hour. Governor King is leaning toward vetoing

the increase. Please call him now (287-3531) and ask for his support.

### Clean Elections

Support the Maine Clean Election Fund by checking "Yes" to clean elections. Your Maine tax form has a new feature — a \$3 check off that lets you do something about campaign finance reform, without adding to your tax bill. By checking "Yes," you direct three of your tax dollars to the Maine Clean Election Fund. Starting in the year 2000, the Clean Election Fund will give limited, equal funding to qualified candidates who agree to strict spending limits and accept no private money. For more information, call the Maine Citizens Leadership Fund at 780-8657.

If you have a social, educational  
or political event to organize in your  
area, please call us.  
We can help!

# Upcoming Events....

## Hate Crimes Planning Meeting

MLGPA is holding an information-gathering meeting for its anti-violence (hate crimes) project. The meeting will be on Thursday, April 2, at 6:30 pm at the MLGPA office in Portland. The office is located on the fourth floor of the Cinamon Building, in the Peace and Justice Center, 1 Pleasant Street in downtown Portland. Everyone is welcome.

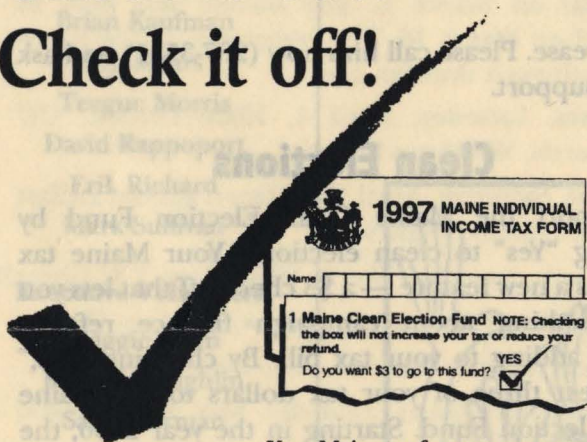
## Maine Women's Lobby 20th Anniversary Celebration

The Maine Women's Lobby will be celebrating 20 years of accomplishment, progress, and courage at their 20th Anniversary Celebration, Thursday, May 14, 1998, at the Radisson Hotel in Portland. For more information call the Maine Women's Lobby at 622-0851.

## Other meetings and events...

MLGPA Legislative Committee meetings, Wednesdays — biweekly, April 1, April 15, April 29, May 13, 6-8pm, Maine Education Association, Augusta  
Regional Community Meeting, April 4, 10am-12noon, UU Church, Augusta  
MLGPA Monthly Board Meeting, Thursday, April 16, 6-9pm, Maine Education Association, Augusta  
Regional Community Meeting, April 25, 10am-12noon, Belfast Free Library, Belfast  
Regional Community Meeting, May 9, 10am-1pm, UU Church, Ellsworth  
Regional Community Meeting, May 9, 4-6pm, Bangor, location TBA  
Regional Community Meeting, May 17, Caribou, time and location TBA  
MLGPA Board Meeting, Thursday, May 21, 6-9pm, Maine Education Association, Augusta

Check it out.  
Check it off!



**Your Maine tax form** has a new feature — a \$3 check off that lets you do something about campaign finance reform, *without adding to your tax bill*. By checking "Yes," you direct three of your tax dollars to the Maine Clean Election Fund.

Starting in the year 2000, the Clean Election Fund will give limited, equal funding to qualified candidates who agree to strict spending limits and accept no private money.

**Do your part.**

☒ **Check "Yes" for Clean Elections.**

For more information: (207) 780-8657 mcl97@aol.com

## Symposium XXIV University of Maine at Farmington May 23-25

The weekend includes room, board, more than a dozen workshops, keynote address by Paul Fuller, a GLBT town meeting, a concert, a dance, and lots of opportunity to schmooze and make friends.

For information and registration contact:

**Symposium XXIV**

PO Box 1894

Bangor, ME 04402-1894

ph: 207-862-2063

email: sympos@hamtel.tds.net