

## The Networker

A Publication of the Gay Lesbian Community Network

July 1991

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### \$\$\$ Youth Group Receives Grant \$\$\$

Haymarket People's Alliance (HPA) has awarded a \$1400.00 grant to Outright Too, Bangor's group for gay and lesbian youth. The grant funding is to be spent on books and videos of interest to young lesbians and gays, as well as for outreach literature and supplies so that the group will become more widely known among gay and lesbian youth in the greater Bangor-Brewer area.

The grant proposal was written by Jane Podolak, Outright Too adult facilitator, and classmate Suzanne Pushard as part of their MSW coursework at U Maine's School of Social Work. They followed up the proposal by presenting the grant request to HPA on June 22. Jim Martin, another Outright Too adult facilitator, ably assisted Jane and Suzanne at the presentation.

Outright Too, which is modelled somewhat on Portland's Outright group for gay and lesbian youth, has been meeting weekly since January 1991. Meetings are held each Monday from 7:30 to 9:00 PM at the Peace and Justice Center, 58 Columbia Street, Bangor. So far the group size has been small - up to nine young people at some meetings, but Suzanne and Jane estimated 400 plus Bangor and Brewer high school students might be gay or lesbian. If you know of any young people, aged 21 years or younger, who would like to talk with other young people regarding issues of sexuality, relationships, coming out or anything pertinent to gay, lesbian, bisexual or questioning youth, please pass the word along. As soon as the grant money is in hand, Outright Too will have it's own P.O.Box. Look for that in the September Networker.

Also look for press releases in The Maine Progressive, The Maine Times, Our Paper, the University's Maine Perspective.

GLCN Mail

Gay Community Members Speak Out on the Meaning of Charlie Howard Day  
Note: These letters had to be edited due to space problems.

Dear Editor:

I feel it necessary to respond to the letter published in your last issue of The Networker. I was both outraged and saddened by what I read. I just could not sit back hoping someone else would respond.

I have been present at every Charlie Howard Memorial and marched. In fact, I interpreted the first Memorial Service just days after Howard was thrown into the Kenduskeag Stream. My participation in these events is not to glorify Charlie Howard, but to make sure it never happens again. Not to you, not to me, not to anyone. While we as a community are certainly not guilty, any more than was Charlie himself, of the tragedy of that day in July, we do have a responsibility to make sure events such as this are not repeated, ever.

I attend the Memorial Service, not because Charlie was so "out" or because he carried a "purse", but because a life was lost to bigotry and hatred. The taking of another's life for whatever reason is an outrage. It matters not what a person is, what they look like or how they act.

Violence of this type is too often passed off as ridding the world of riff raff.

I march not because Howard was such a pillar in our community, but to make our presence known to the larger community. We are here. We will not go away. And we will be reckoned with as a vital viable group of people.

I go to rallies not because I condone the "hitting on straights", but because I am angry. I am angry that homophobia is so rampant in the world. I am angry that violence, such as the murder of Charlie Howard, is inflicted upon us because of that homophobia.

So I pray, I march, and I rally. I do this so that you can write letters and criticize. I do this so you and I will be safe another day, hopefully. For once they have taken all the "real" homosexuals, they will come after the "subtle" ones. And when that happens to you and your loved ones, who will be left to stand up and say "NO MORE" ? We will all be gone, defending your right to be a person.

Those of us who choose to be out, who think it is our responsibility to march, do so for people like you as well as for ourselves. For until we are all free from fear and prejudice, no one will be free. If you can't be with us at the Memorial Service, and the march, so be it. But at least thank us for helping to make your world a little safer, so far.

Sincerely,  
Deborah H. Carney

To All at GLCN,

I have been receiving the Networker for many months and mainly looked at it as a resource for events, whether it be political, social, support group, or health matters. I do appreciate getting it for that reason. When I read the June issue, I was very happy and surprised to read the article that covered the first page. I was glad someone had the courage to take a stand and say something concerning the Charlie Howard Memorial activities. I didn't know Charlie personally and it is sad that he has passed on, but I too agree that it is time to get on with life and start living again. Let's get off the pity pot and feeling sorry for ourselves and start celebrating the fact that we are alive and well and we are a productive part of the community. I need to see and hear positive images being presented to the public. How long are we going to allow other people to affect our minds, hearts, and spirits? We need to stand tall and proud and with self respect in the city of Bangor and in all the other communities in Maine.

I would also like to comment about the Riverfront . That is a gay bar/club in Bangor. I have mixed feelings about it. First I am grateful that there is a place in the area to be able to go to and be comfortable and meet other people that are gay/lesbian. I believe there is a need and always will be a need for each one of us to have a place where we can go, socialize, dance, relax, meet people, and enjoy ourselves. However, the part that stops me from going (I've been there once) is the serving of alcohol and the atmosphere which accompanies the use of a mood altering drug. I choose not to put alcohol or other drugs into my body. This is my right and choice and I feel healthy and positive in living this way. Other people don't and I respect their right to live the way they choose. For me I have found there is a big difference in interacting with people that drink and that don't. The communication level is much more positive and valid in speaking with someone that is sober. Of course, I can go to the club and not drink and stick with people that also don't drink, which I have done, simply to be with my own kind, have a night out and relax. But even in

doing this, I found for me the atmosphere unpleasant because of the people that consume alcohol around me and how they act. I became very grateful for my choice of living (without alcohol) when I observe the results of alcohol consumption.

So, I have chosen not to participate in this kind of nite life and I am pursuing other ways of meeting positive healthy people.

Thanks for listening,  
My sincere and warm wishes  
Brenda Goodwin

Dear Networker,

I am writing in response to the anonymous writer who was so critical of the views expressed by the Networker writers. While I am not always in agreement with the views published, I am happy to see the Networker is open minded and prints opposing opinions. (I am quite confident that this type of communication is just what the Networker has been trying to stimulate.)

My particular response is to the writer's opinions on the community's remembrances and celebration of Charlie Howard. I believe the writer has missed the point of why this event occurs annually. To me "Charlie Howard" is more than a name. He was a person, and although I may not have personally "approved" of all of his actions as a person, had I known him, the fact remains that he was murdered because of who he was and the lifestyle he led.

To me "Charlie Howard" represents all people who are not a part of the main stream of America, no, let's say, "the world" Even if "Charlie Howard" was overt in his actions, he did not deserve to be murdered for it. "Charlie Howard" represents all lesbian and gay men (and any others of the many complex sexual orientations which exist in human behavior), who have been harrassed, abused, or murdered for being themselves.

While I am not a marcher or a demonstrator, nor would I choose to participate in an organization such as ACT UP, I do support their guts to take a stand against our oppression. They are radical in their ways, but they are being noticed. It's a nasty job, but somebody has to do it.

I am a middle class lesbian educator, my partner and I have been together for over 10 years. We are normal people living a normal life.

Charlie Howard is not being memorialized just for those who participate. He is memorialized for all of those who took steps in the past to take our lives to where we have them today. There are many who stood out and were counted. The celebration of life is for all of us today and for those who will come long after us.

To look for acceptance in a more subtle manner will not succeed. Should Martin Luther King Jr. have tried to gain civil rights for black Americans "in a more subtle manner"?

If we totally separate ourselves and "our cause" to be accepted as "normal people who live normal lives", then we too participate in oppression and segregation. I perso

nally am not willing to settle in for a life as a minority either as a woman or a lesbian and just be accepted in a subtle manner.

The writer needs to broaden her horizons. There's a real world out there. To sit back and be "accepted as normal people who live normal lives" is part of the problem with members of our community. Giving support to the diversities within our own community, to stand up and be counted, is part of the solution.

I congratulate the writer for stepping out to express her views through The Networker. It was a step in the right direction and I encourage her to continue to do so in the future. Dialogue promotes growth in all of us.

Sincerely,  
Jane L. Rothrock

### Our Community's Calendar

GLCN will be taking summer vacation during the months of July and August. The next issue of The Networker will be September, 1991. We will also not hold our regular Wednesday night meetings during the next two months.

We will hold a General Meeting on Wednesday August 28 at 7:30 PM at The Peace and Justice Center 58 Columbia St. Bangor. If you haven't been involved in GLCN in the past, we hope you'll get involved when we start up again.

OUTRIGHT TOO, the Gay Lesbian Youth group will continue to meet on Monday nights at 7:30 PM. throughout the summer. These meetings are also held at the Peace and Justice Center.

Sunday July, 7                      Charlie Howard Memorial, 11AM  
Bangor Unitarian Church (Main  
and Union) Service followed by  
march to Kenduskeag River  
Bridge

Sat July 14                      WERU Full Circle Summer Fair  
All Day. Blue Hill Fairgrounds  
Blue Hill.

Sunday, July 21                      Lesbian Brunch. Potluck, at  
Robin and Janet's in Hampden  
Noon to whenever. call 862-5907

#### Ongoing

Women's HIV group meets each first and third Thursday, 7:30  
to 9PM, Bangor. Call 667-3506 or 947-0700 for details.

HIV/AIDS Support Group meets each Tuesday evening in Ellsworth. Call 667-3506.

#### Classifieds

Lakefront Cottage Rentals: 2 Available, Brewer Lake, Sleeps 4-6, electric, hot water, shower, porta-potty, and nice privy. \$275 - \$300 weekly. We will donate to GLCN with each rental through this ad. After June 25 Call 825-3148.

Summer Rental - Quiet and private camp for rent on a Bangor Area Lake. Large sun deck, cold running H2O and electricity. Use of beach area with paddle boat and canoe.

Tenting space available. Call Denise and Sarah 945-5932.