

MLGPA News

Politics, Education, Outreach

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

April 1999

Banquet Rescheduled for April 10th!!

Due to a winter storm on March 6, the banquet was postponed

Don't Miss Out On This Wonderful Evening!

- ... 15 years of activism and people captured on film
- ... A video tribute to the late FE Pentlarge, long-time supporter of gay rights
- ... Awards recognizing people who have advocated for us over the last 15 years
- ... The new "Youth in Leadership" award
- ... Celebration of our community.
- ... Music, dancing, fun!!

6pm – Social Hour

7pm – Dinner

8pm – Program and Awards

9pm-midnight – Dancing!!

Tickets are \$30 per person. Please purchase in advance.

Call 800-556-5472 (or 761-3732 in Portland) for ticket information.

Equality Begins At Home!!

A Statewide Rally for Equal Rights

Saturday, March 27, 11am–1pm at Cony High School, 120 Cony Street (East Side Rotary), Augusta

Kick off the new effort to attain equal rights in Maine

Continue building community

Celebrate "Equality Begins At Home"

Take pride in what we have:

- ▼ The new **Maine Coalition for Equal Rights**. (Come join!)
- ▼ Six civil rights bills introduced to the Legislature.
- ▼ An MLGPA lobbyist monitoring progress in the Legislature and advocating on our behalf.
- ▼ The beginning our newest effort to achieve equal rights for LGBT people!

▼ Live Music ▼ Local and National Speakers ▼ Information ▼ Networking ▼ Food ▼

Bring all your friends!!

MLGPA

Politics, Education,
Outreach

Executive Committee:

Betsy Smith

President

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Paul Holbrook

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Robin Lambert

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Erik Richard

Mark Sullivan

Honorary Board Members:

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Richard Steinman

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Maine Coalition for Equal Rights Gains Momentum

What started out as monthly state-wide meetings for people concerned about attaining LGBT civil rights has led to a progressive coalition for equal rights. The coalition meets monthly in Bangor, and has established committees to carry out the necessary work of attaining civil rights. The committees are: education, religious education, grassroots organizing, communications, finance, structure, and conflict resolution. Committees meet at various places in Maine and sometimes on-line. Anyone may join the coalition. Simply attend a meeting of the coalition (next two meetings listed below) or contact MLGPA (800-55-MLGPA) for more information.

Committees meet often and report their progress at each monthly meeting. The Communications committee has established two domains on the internet and will be designing a web page soon (though not in service yet, they will be equalmaine.com and equalmaine.edu). The Education committee is producing

the first coalition newsletter by the end of March, in which coalition updates, legislative alerts, and committee work will be reported. The Structure committee has proposed an operating structure for the coalition, which includes how a campaign fits into the picture. At the next meeting, they will propose May 8 as a "campaign plan" workshop day. More reports to come!

The next two coalition meetings are:

- ▼ **Saturday, March 27, 1-4pm**, Cony High School, 120 Cony Street (on the East-Side Rotary), Augusta — following the Rally for Equal Rights!!
- ▼ **Saturday, April 17, 1-4pm**, University of Maine, Orono, Wells Common. Following the meeting, everyone is invited to attend the Wilde-Stein Banquet at the University of Maine. The dinner is being offered to meeting attendees, free of charge, compliments of Wilde-Stein. Come celebrate the anniversary of the state's first student gay/lesbian organization.

Portland Police Seeking to Diversify Its Force

The Portland Police Department recently contacted MLGPA in an effort to recruit gay and lesbian individuals to its force. They are currently seeking entry level police officer candidates. If you are interested or know someone who is, please take note of the following information.

Applications for police officer candidate must be submitted no later than MARCH 26. Applications are available through MLGPA (851-3741) or the Portland Police (874-8624). The Portland Police Department is a Nationally Ac-

credited Department of Excellence, is strongly committed to diversity in its workforce, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity employer.

Retired Col. Margareth Cammermeyer

at the University of Maine, Orono

April 19, 6-7pm.

**For more information call
581-1596 or 581-1439.**

MLGPA Legislative Report

from Susan Farnsworth, Lobbyist

CIVIL RIGHTS BILLS

None of the six bills proposing to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation have been printed. A request has been made, but not yet acted on, for them to be carried over until next year's session. Stay posted.

HIV-RELATED BILLS.

Two of the many HIV-related bills deal with the criminalization of transmission. The Criminal Justice Committee has heard them and held its work session on March 17. These two bills, Rep. Shields bill, LD 211 "An Act to Criminalize the Negligent or Purposeful Transmission of HIV" and Sen. Daggett's bill, LD 1320, "An Act to Create a Penalty for the Purposeful Transmission of Sexually Transmitted Diseases" were both opposed by MLPGA, along with the range of AIDS service organizations, the Bureau of Health and many others.

On March 24 at 1:30 pm in Room 438 of the State House, there will be 5 bills heard that deal with HIV. Thanks to "Equality Begins At Home," there will be a lot of supportive, interested

LGBT persons already at the State House for the EBAH luncheon. We oppose four of the five, all sponsored by Rep. Thomas Shields (R-Auburn):

- LD 57 "An Act to Change Reporting Requirements of Certain HIV Test Results" — This is called "the names bill" because it requires that names of persons testing positive be reported to DHS. MLGPA joins the AIDS Alliance and other allies in concern over this proposed change and urges instead the use of CDC-approved new information technology. This technology makes possible individualized reporting by means of "unique identifiers," rather than names, and thus maintains confidentiality.
- LD 58 "An Act Regarding the Composition of the Maine HIV Advisory Committee" This bill drastically reduces the size of this important HIV policy committee and eliminates meaningful representation from significant constituencies, especially consumers.

- LD 914 "An Act to Require Testing for HIV and Blood-borne Pathogens of all Prisoners in the Maine Correctional System." The fiscal note alone may well kill this one, but we must respond loudly and clearly to the fears and misconceptions on which this appears to be based, or like a communicable disease, this misinformation will continue to spread.
- LD 1591 "An Act to Amend the Laws Concerning HIV Testing." This one would close all anonymous testing sites in the State, remove the requirement for basic HIV counseling for people being tested, and would waive the requirement to obtain written informed consent before anyone can be tested!! Clearly, this would hurt not help the great progress that has been made, and is being made, in this State with respect to HIV education, testing and prevention.

MLGPA is supportive of a bill sponsored by Rep. Michael Quint:

Continued on Page 4

Symposium XXV

Memorial Day Weekend

Friday–Monday, May 28–31, 1999 on the campus of the University of Maine at Presque Isle hosted — for the 5th time — by the women & men of Northern Lambda Nord

Keynote Speakers:

Diane Elze was involved with the earliest Symposia at the University of Maine at Orono and was instrumental in the creation of Outright/Portland. **Robin Metcalfe**, a community historian, visual arts curator, and long-time Canadian activist from Halifax, has written essays and erotic fiction for gay periodicals around the world.

Workshops:

The weekend's workshops include coming out and being out, bisexuality and transgender issues, rural organizing, long-term relationships, and many others.

Film Presentation:

Bob Poirier, Portland videographer, will screen and discuss his video, "Tangible Fathers," the story of a gay priest.

Entertainment:

Lynn Deeves, singer/songwriter from Richmond, Maine; **Martin Swinger**, singer/songwriter from Augusta

Your Cost:

Complete package is just \$140 for 3 nights lodging, 6 meals, and admission to all events: 2 nights is \$120; 1 night is \$90; other "commuter" plans are even less! (prices are slightly higher if you register after May 1). A limited number of scholarships are available.

For A Pre-Registration Form, contact: Symposium 25, PO Box 990, Caribou, ME 04736-0990; 498-2088; e-mail symposium@mfx.net.

Calendar of Events

March 24 — "Equality Begins At Home" LGBT EXPOSITION and LUNCHEON in Moose Room of State House. 10am - 2pm. For more information contact MLGPA at 800-556-5472.

March 24 — Hearing on 5 HIV bills. 1:30pm, Judiciary Committee Room (Rm. 438) in State House.

March 24 — MLGPA Legislative Committee meeting. 6-8pm, Augusta City Center, 16 Cony Street, Conference Room C.

March 25 — Maine Coalition for Equal Rights Structure committee meeting, 6-8pm, MLGPA office (1 Pleasant Street), Portland.

March 27 — "Equality Begins At Home" RALLY FOR EQUAL RIGHTS! 11am, Cony High School, Augusta.

March 27 — Maine Coalition for Equal Rights monthly meeting. 1-4pm, following rally. Cony High School, Augusta.

March 27 — Maine Rural Network Foothills Fairness Project meeting, 7pm, Room C23, Roberts Learning Center, U/Maine-Farmington. Contact Brian at 778-7379 for more information

March 28 — Maine Rural Network Kennebec County organizing meeting, 10:30 am, Waterville Unitarian-Universalist Church, 84 Silver St, Waterville. FMI, please contact Naomi at 642-2015 or nomad@watchic.net

March 28 — Maine Rural Network Oxford meeting at 4pm, UU Church, 479 Maine Street, Norway. FMI, please contact Naomi at 642-2015 or nomad@watchic.net

March 31 — MLGPA Legislative Committee meeting. 6-8pm, Augusta City Center, 16 Cony Street Conference Room C.

April 7 — MLGPA Legislative Committee meeting. 6-8pm, Augusta City Center, 16 Cony Street Conference Room C.

April 10 — MLGPA 15th Anniversary Awards Banquet, 6pm, Augusta Civic Center. For ticket information call 800-556-5472.

April 10 — Maine Rural Network Androscoggin meeting, 2-4 pm, Room 130 (downstairs) Olin Arts Center Bates College, Lewiston. Please contact Naomi at 642-2015 or nomad@watchic.net to verify location.

April 14 — MLGPA Legislative Committee meeting. 6-8pm, Augusta City Center, 16 Cony Street Conference Room C.

April 15 — MLGPA monthly Board meeting, 6-9pm, University of Maine at Augusta Campus Center.

April 17 — Maine Coalition for Equal Rights monthly meeting, 1-4pm, University of Maine, Orono, Wells Common.

April 17 — Wilde-Stein 25th anniversary Dinner, University of Maine, Orono, Wells Common. For more information contact Wilde-Stein at 581-1596.

April 19 — Retired Col. Margareth Cammermeyer speaks at the University of Maine, Orono, 6-7pm, about her life in the military and her run for Senate. For more information contact Wilde-Stein at 581-1596 or Multicultural Affairs at 581-1439.

April 24 — HOPE Festival Earth Day, 10am - 5pm, Brewer Auditorium. For more information call 942-9343.

May 8 — Comedian Suzanne Westenhoefer, Portland. Details to follow!

If you have any social, educational or political events in your area and would like a hand organizing, please call us! We can help!

Legislative Report

Continued from Page 3

- LD 1529 "An Act Regarding the Composition of the Maine HIV Advisory Committee." Unlike LD 58, Rep. Quint's bill builds in broad-based constituency representation and streamlines the Committee without gutting it.

OTHER BILLS

English as official language. I testified for MLGPA in opposition to LD 264. I said that as LGBT people we understand what unintended consequences can follow (in the form of harassment and violence) when an official sanction such as this suggests that one group is less than or not as official as everyone else. The bill will probably be killed by the committee after its work session on March 17.

Come to the MLGPA Legislative Committee meetings. Wednesday nights at 6 pm in Augusta City Hall. There is MUCH to do continuing through April. After the HIV bills will come the Choice bills!! We need your help!

HOPE Announces Earth Day

The HOPE (Help Organize Peace Earthwide) **Earthday Festival** will be held on Saturday, April 24, 10am-5pm, at the Brewer Auditorium (State and Wilson Streets near Brewer Shopping Center).

The Guest Speaker will be Nicols Fox, author of "Spoiled on Contaminated Food: Causes and Solutions." Special events are Earth Day 5K Fun Run at 11am, Environmental Art with Wally Warren, food for many diets and tastes, Organizational Fair with over 60 Non-Profit Groups, and live music with Joyfull Noise, Darthe Jennings, North Star Sisters, and Liberty Balalaika Ensemble. Free Admission. For more information contact: Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine, 942-9343.