

MLGPA News

Advocacy for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Communities since 1984

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

September 1999

Maine Diversity Alliance to hold Leadership Institute

We're looking for a few good Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered people! MLGPA's educational foundation, the Maine Diversity Alliance, is sponsoring a unique Leadership Institute on December 2-5. This will be a nonpartisan, intensive, 3½ day training in all major areas of an electoral campaign for people who are serious about taking a leadership role in future electoral campaigns here in Maine.

Topics to be covered include:

1. Strategic planning — what is a campaign plan & how do its parts fit together
2. Building a volunteer base — develop a leadership team and recruit lots of volunteers
3. Voter ID — how to reach supporters, educate the undecided & measure our progress
4. Message and media — how to express the issues and work with the press
5. Campaigning Skills — how to communicate one-on-one with voters
6. Countering homophobic — anticipating & responding to attacks from the opposition
7. Fundraising — how to raise the money to run a strong state-wide effort

Last year we held community meetings from Ogunquit to Caribou to discuss the failed referendum campaign and ways for us to move forward for LGBT civil rights. The single most

important recommendation we received from just about everyone was to do more education and grassroots organizing in rural Maine.

Since then, through a series of statewide meetings — all on weekends in Bangor so that everyone could attend — we've helped establish a new coalition, the Maine Coalition for Equal Rights. And with your generous financial support we've retained a professional community organizer to increase our activist base. But one of the biggest reasons for the urban/rural split in the past has been the uneven distribution of campaign expertise. This training is our answer.

With the help of Dave Fleischer and the Policy Institute of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force we have developed this program. And to make

sure we reach all of Maine in the next referendum campaign, we want to offer this training to two people each of our 16 counties. Course graduates will bring new expertise to their rural counties and make a significant difference in the next campaign. It could be the foundation for a true grassroots effort, run by local people at the local level.

Over the past five years Dave Fleischer has conducted dozens of courses in electoral skills for the bipartisan Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, the only national group dedicated to providing financial and technical support to qualified openly gay and lesbian candidates. Those from Maine who have attended one of these

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Plan to attend the

MLGPA Annual Meeting

September 18, 1999 ▼ 10am-12noon

Robinson Hall, UMA ▼ Civic Center Drive, Augusta

Election of Officers and Board Members
All members are encouraged to attend

For more information contact MLGPA at 1-800-55-MLGPA
(in Portland 761-3732) or mlgpa@javanet.com.

MLGPA

Advocacy for the Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual, and Transgendered
Communities since 1984

Executive Committee:

Betsy Smith
President
David Garrity
Vice President
Paul Alpert
Treasurer
Graham DeCoster
Rick Gowen
Susan Sparaco

Board Members:

Maggie Allen
Harold Booth
Chris Brennan
Jennifer Goldman
Celeste Gosselin
Ron Hersom
Paul Holbrook
Sarah Holmes
Robin Lambert
P.J. Mears
Erik Richard
Mark Sullivan

Honorary Board Members:

Judy Edgerly
Richard Steinman
Del Wilson

Mailing Address:

PO Box 232
Hallowell, ME 04347-0232

e-mail:

mlgpa@javanet.com

Voicemail:

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

One Member's Opinion...

As a physician in 1958, I saw the ruined life of an adolescent near term. She had been impregnated by her uncle. She and her family had been unable to consider ending the pregnancy early on because abortion for any reason was illegal. Many of the illegal abortionists of the day were in it for the money, treating their patients with haste and using contaminated instruments. She had avoided them and was alive, but she suffered the loss of her childhood at the age of 12.

In 1969 I worked with a mother of two teen-aged children to obtain the legal abortion that she and her husband desired. She had to meet with a minister 40 miles away to arrange for a flight to an abortion clinic in Mexico, the closest place where an abortion was legal in those days.

In 1979 I found myself the head of the Dayton (OH) Area Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights because I believed that women have the right to make their own decision regarding their lives. I realized that making the decision to have an abortion is exceedingly personal and exceedingly difficult. To revoke the Supreme Court decision of Roe v. Wade would take us back to the time when such decisions were immeasurably burdened with both medical and legal intrusions,

into a matter which concerned a woman and her doctor.

As a father in 1983, I was greatly relieved that my daughter was able to go through with an abortion early in her pregnancy. She had found herself pregnant for the first time shortly after discovering that her husband was a felon. At the same time he had become physically abusive of her. She had just separated from him. To go through with a pregnancy conceived with him was too much for her to deal with.

The November 1999 referendum that voters face asks us to make certain abortions illegal. This is another step in the strategy of anti-abortionists to make all abortions illegal again. The anti-abortionists' referendum is similar to those already found unconstitutional in other states. Despite this, they would have us turn back the clock, returning to a climate where abortion is effectively denied women and children in situations similar to the ones to which I've been a witness.

Roe v. Wade must remain the law of the land. Vote against the anti-abortion referendum this fall.

The Rev. F. David Fisher, MD
July 15, 1999

MLGPA meets at 6pm on the third Thursday of the month, except for its Annual Meeting on the third Saturday of September, at Robinson Hall, UMA, Civic Center Drive, Augusta. For more information: snail mail (PO Box 232, Hallowell, ME 04347), e-mail (mlgpa@javanet.com) or voicemail (761-3732 or 800/55-MLGPA).

The Legislative Committee of MLGPA meets every other Tuesday at 6pm in Gray. For directions, to confirm dates and for further information, please contact Celeste Gosselin at 657-6092 or cgosselin@maine.rr.com, or MLGPA Lobbyist Susan Farnsworth at 626-3312 or farns@gwi.net. You may also use our toll-free voicemail at 1-800-55-MLGPA or send us email at mlgpa@javanet.com.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

For the third annual Great Pumpkin Ball

Saturday, October 30th

HOLIDAY INN By The Bay ▼ Portland

8:00pm-midnight

*To volunteer or join the ever-expanding
planning committee call Maggie at 442-9513*

MLGPA attends Federation Meeting

MLGPA joined member groups from 45 states and the District of Columbia for the meeting of the Federation of Statewide Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Political Organizations in Minneapolis in July. Founded just two years ago with the support of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the Federation has grown rapidly; there were just 36 members in 1998. MLGPA's Lobbyist Susan Farnsworth and V.P. Dave Garrity attended the four full days of training and information sharing, which were coordinated by NGLTF.

The focus was on grassroots organizing, legislative strategies and growing our base at the state level, and there were presentations from a number of national groups and political parties on what the elections of 2000 may mean to us. Workshop topics included: transgendered inclusion; organizing and working with gay youth;

and, understanding and responding to the radical right. It seemed that every state was engaged in one or more legislative effort over hate crimes, civil rights, adoption, sodomy repeal, marriage or domestic partnership.

We also reviewed the success and discussed the future of Equality Begins at Home Week last March, when 350 events were staged in all 50 states to highlight and encourage grassroots and legislative efforts on behalf of our LGBT communities. Most seemed to agree that the EBAH message applies to all the work we do, and that we should hold future EBAH events at any time of year. MLGPA is already planning to repeat early next year our successful "Expo of Maine LGBT Organizations and Lunch at the State House," which was attended by 60 legislators and introduced them to 40 of Maine's LGBT groups.

But, out of everything we learned that week, the most reassuring for us was to find out there are lgbt activists in other states who are even more hopelessly dedicated and ridiculously overworked than we are! Our thanks to the Maine Community Foundation for the gift that made this discovery possible.

Leadership Institute

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training in the past — Dale McCormick, State Rep. Michael Quint, Jim Martin, Pat Peard, and MLGPA President Betsy Smith — have already demonstrated its value by their own achievement and leadership in our community.

We're only looking for people who are seriously interested in taking this course. Not only will it take a substantial amount of one's time, but it also requires a serious commitment to work on a future campaign. While we won't be charging a specific fee for the training, we will ask for an "in-kind" pledge from everyone in lieu of a tuition. Options would include a commitment to raise \$1000 for next year's referendum campaign (or other worthy cause) by March 15, 2000, OR, a commitment to identify 250 gay or pro-gay voters by the following election day, OR, to recruit 50 volunteers and 5 volunteer coordinators. You'll learn how to do all three in the training itself.

Please let us know if you or someone you know would make a good candidate for the training. Contact us by phone, 1-800/55-MLGPA (in Portland 761-3732), or by e-mail, mlgpa@javanet.com. We would also welcome your financial support for this program. Send your tax deductible contributions to the Maine Diversity Alliance, P O Box 232, Hallowell ME 04347

Are You Checking Your Mailbox?

You'll be hearing from us very soon. No, we aren't going to make you a sweepstakes winner, but we can give you a chance to make a difference in the lives of all Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered citizens in Maine.

September marks the start of our fall appeal, and it has never been more important than it is this year. Please take the time to read our letter when it comes. Learn more about what we've accomplished in the last year and, with your generous support, what we hope to do in the next.

When you receive it, we hope you'll do two things. First, of course, we hope you'll write a check to help fund the vital community outreach, legislative advocacy and educational programs and activities that are described in the letter.

Second, and just as important, we hope that you'll talk with your friends and neighbors about this appeal and the work we're doing. If they received our letter, encourage them to make a gift to MLGPA. If they didn't receive one, offer to mail their check in to us with yours. Or call the MLGPA office and let us know, we'll be happy to send a letter to your friend!

Fundraising is always a difficult thing to do. People wonder where all the money goes. So be sure to look over our letter and find out exactly what MLGPA is planning. We think you'll be happy to help make it happen.

Please watch for our letter, send in a contribution, and talk about it with your friends!

You're Invited to a House Party

In the next six weeks MLGPA and Maine Rural Network are sponsoring house parties and educational forums to spread the truth about the Abortion Ban referendum. These are great opportunities to meet local like-minded people — gay, bi, trans and straight men are especially welcome. Learn what the Christian Coalition and the

Christian Civic League are trying to do this time, and get the word out to your friends and neighbors.

Here's what's confirmed to date, but we're still scheduling new parties. You'll be invited to any new events set up in your area. If you're willing to be a host/ess, contact Kathleen McGee (443-9582 or kmcgee@gwi.net).

September 16, 7-9pm, East Bethel Grange, Maine Rural Network, Naomi Falcone (642-2015)

September 19, 4-6pm, Peter Rees, Ellsworth (667-7828)

September 19, 4-6pm, Scott Hawkins, Portland (774-3806)

September 25, 4-6pm, Paul Alpert, Lovell (925-1034)

September 26, 3-5pm, Kate Perkins, Portland (871-9324)

September 28, 7-9pm, Helen Bushong, Norway (743-6089)

September 29, 7-9pm, Gracia Woodward, Bowdoinham (666-8147)

September 30, 7-9pm, Chris Hall, Bristol, (563-8604)

October 1, 6-8pm, Celeste Gosselin, Gray (657-6092)

October 2, 2-4pm, Annie Kiermaier, West Rockport (236-4734)

October 5, 7-9pm, Robin Lambert, Portland (773-3564)

October 14, 7-9pm, Norway Public Library, Maine Rural Network, Naomi Falcone (642-2015)

Just The Facts

Question 1, the Proposed Abortion Ban . . .

#1 IS VAGUE AND CONFUSING

Question 1 is a vague and confusing ballot measure that **could ban almost all abortions in Maine, even those in the first months of pregnancy.**

#1 IS UNNECESSARY

Maine already has a tough abortion law that makes it illegal to perform late abortions unless the life or the health of the woman is endangered.

#1 THREATENS FAMILY PRIVACY

Question 1 could **force doctors to turn over patients' private medical records.**

#1 FAILS TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF MAINE WOMEN

This ban eliminates all the health exceptions that we now have Maine's current abortion law (like cancer, or greatly increased risk of stroke).

Don't just take our word for it —

READ IT YOURSELF!

Call 842-6461 for a copy of Question 1.

Volunteers Needed for phone banking, fundraising, and office tasks. If you can help defeat the abortion ban this November, please call the NO on 1 Coalition today at 842-6461.

REMEMBER, there's only one Pro-Choice vote on November 2 . . . NO on 1!

The Joy of House Parties

Many of us have been asked — or soon will be — to entertain a few of our friends at a "House Party for Choice" in an effort to educate our supporters before this November's vote on the anti-abortion referendum.

The "House Party" is a simple tool for sharing information. The formula that seems easiest goes like this:

1. Contact Kathleen McGee, our Community Organizer, and tell her you are willing to have a party. You can reach her at kmcgee@gwi.net or 443-9582.
2. Prepare a list of those you want invited.
3. Pick a date and time.

The No on 1 Coalition, formerly known as the Campaign to Protect Women's Health, will provide invitations — even addressing them from your list if you'd like — and a speaker. MLGPA will also try to send a representative. If providing food is a prob-

lem for you, they will assist with food as well.

About the food — many of us are overwhelmed at the thought of serving food to our friends — WELL — the idea of these parties is to come together for about two hours — what a great time to try out a new dessert, coffee, tea, and/or punch. Even easier are some of the local bakeries, Izzy's cheesecake, or other favorite dessert treat.

Now, if you are feeling funny about having people in, invite four or five friends to join you for lunch, a speaker can be arranged in that setting too.

The idea behind that house parties is to share information with a few of your friends. This is not meant to be stressful, rather informative. You can make it whatever you want it to be. The point is to keep it simple and learn something new.

Dick and Jane Do Strategic Planning

Put together seventeen extremely entertaining and energetic people; one highly skilled facilitator; a highly organized set of assessment, planning and brainstorming activities; multicolored post-its & stick-on dots, a couple of easels with pads and tons of magic markers; all in Celeste & Jewel's backyard on an absolutely sweltering summer day and what have you got?

Why, the 1999 Annual MLGPA Summer Retreat, of course!

We began the morning of July 17 racking our sleepy brains trying to remember everything we actually accomplished in the last year and then write it all down on little post-its. Next we pasted the post-its all over the side of the garage. Then we tried to weed out the duplicates and organize the rest into groups of similar activities. It

covered the entire wall! And it was amazing — not only how much we'd done, but how many things we weren't aware that others were doing. We needed a break after that and some people went in the pool. We did some more stuff like tell people what they have to do if they're on the Board. Finally, we got to have lunch.

In the afternoon we broke up into teams and dreamed up lots of things we thought should be done in all of our different program areas — like special events, membership, legislative action, newsletter, etc. — and we walked around writing them down on big sheets of paper for each program. When we finished one loop around the yard, we walked around again as one big group. This time looked at what everyone had written and asked

people to explain the ones that were weird. After that we went back into teams and we got lots of different colored stick-on dots. Each color was supposed to be a member, a committee, an officer or somebody. Then we had to walk around again and put a dot on all these big ideas for who is actually going to do the work. This part wasn't much fun at all, but then we got to go back into the pool. Some people liked it so much, that they want to do more in November. The end.

All humor aside, we learned and accomplished a great deal. We came away with some exciting ideas and the draft of a new program plan that will divide our activities between MLGPA, the political organization and our tax exempt educational arm, the Maine Diversity Alliance.

Calendar of Events

September 7, Tuesday, 6:00pm

MLGPA Legislative Committee holds its first meeting in Gray, where it will meet every other Tuesday this fall. For directions and for further information, please contact Co-chair Celeste Gosselin at 657-6092 (cgosselin@maine.rr.com) or Susan Farnsworth, MLGPA Lobbyist, at 626-3312 (farns@gwi.net). You may also use our toll-free voicemail at 1-800-55-MLGPA or send us email at mlgpa@javanet.com.

September 9, Thursday, 6:30–8:30pm

Northern Lambda Nord's monthly meeting at the Community Center, 568 Main Street, Caribou (across from the Nylander Museum). All interested persons are welcome to attend. For More Information, call Dick in Caribou 498-0900 (Mon-Fri 8a-6p) or at graphique@mfex.net

September 13th, Monday, 7:00pm

Western Maine Rural Network meeting to finalize preparations for the September 16th community forum. At the Alder River Grange, East Bethel Road, East Bethel. For more information please contact Naomi at 642-201 or nomad@watchic.net.

September 16, Thursday, 7:00pm

Community Forum on the Abortion Ban Referendum at the East Bethel Grange, East Bethel Road. Sponsored by the East Bethel Grange and Maine Rural Network. For more information contact Naomi 642-2015 or nomad@watchic.net.

September 18, Saturday, 10am–Noon

ANNUAL MEETING of MLGPA (Maine Lesbian Gay Political Alliance) at Robinson Hall, UMA, Civic Center Drive, Augusta. Elec-

tion of new Board members and officers; all members may vote and are encouraged to attend. We're actively seeking volunteers from all parts of Maine to help defeat this fall's abortion ban referendum and to work for passage of the new civil rights bill. New members always welcome. For more info: voicemail 1-800/55-MLGPA (or 761-3732 in Portland) or email mlgpa@javanet.com.

September 21, Tuesday, 6:00pm

MLGPA Legislative Committee meeting in Gray. For directions and for further information, please contact Co-chair Celeste Gosselin at 657-6092 (cgosselin@maine.rr.com) or Susan Farnsworth, MLGPA Lobbyist, at 626-3312 (farns@gwi.net). You

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Calendar of Events

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may also use our toll-free voice-mail at 1-800-55-MLGPA or send us email at mlgpa@javanet.com.

October 5, Tuesday, 6:00pm

MLGPA Legislative Committee meeting in Gray. For directions and for further information, please contact Co-chair Celeste Gosselin at 657-6092 (cgosselin@maine.rr.com) or Susan Farnsworth, MLGPA Lobbyist, at 626-3312 (farns@ghi.net). You may also use our toll-free voice-mail at 1-800-55-MLGPA or send us email at mlgpa@javanet.com.

October 14, Thursday, 6:00–8:30pm

MLGPA monthly board meeting at Robinson Hall - UMA, Civic Center Drive, Augusta. ****SPECIAL PROGRAM:** Representatives from Dirigo Alliance will brief us on the new Clean Elections law and how we can best work within it. **** MLGPA board meetings are regularly held on the third Thursday of the month.** For more info: voicemail 1-800/55-MLGPA (or 761-3732 in Portland) or email mlgpa@javanet.com. We're actively seeking volunteers from all parts of Maine to help defeat this fall's abortion ban referendum and to work for passage of the new civil rights bill. New members always welcome.

October 14, Thursday, 7:00–9:00pm

Community forum on the anti-abortion referendum that will be on the ballot this November. The forum will be held at the Norway Public Library, Main Street, Norway. Sponsored by Western Maine Rural Network (MRN's central Oxford County group). For more information contact Naomi 642-2015 or nomad@watchic.net.

October 16, Saturday, 9:00am–1:00pm

Suzanne Pharr: "Grassroots Organizing & Coalition Building" at the Bangor Public Library. Sponsored

by the Maine Community Foundation Equity Fund, this workshop is specific to LGBT organizations & concerns. Limited space, to reserve call Pam 761-2440

October 17, Sunday, 9:00am–1:00pm

Suzanne Pharr: "Grassroots Organizing & Coalition Building" at the Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland. Sponsored by the Maine Community Foundation Equity Fund, this workshop is open to all. Limited space, to reserve call Pam 761-2440.

October 19, Tuesday, 6:00pm

MLGPA Legislative Committee meeting in Gray. For directions and for further information, please contact Co-chair Celeste Gosselin at 657-6092 (cgosselin@maine.rr.com) or Susan Farnsworth, MLGPA Lobbyist, at 626-3312 (farns@ghi.net). You may also use our toll-free voice-mail at 1-800-55-MLGPA or send us email at mlgpa@javanet.com.

October 30, Saturday, 8:00pm–Midnight

The Third Annual Great Pumpkin Ball at the Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland. Mark this date on your calendar now. Costumes! Dancing! Prizes! To volunteer, call Maggie at 442-9513.

3rd Thursdays, 6:30–8:00pm

SUPPORT GROUP for Gay & Bisexual Men meets at ACLA office (4 Lafayette St. in Lewiston) 6:30 to 8. For more information contact Sean: 786-4697 or acla@ghi.net.

2nd and 4th Friday, 7:00–9:00pm

Midcoast OUTRIGHT, a program of Merrymeeting AIDS Support Services, meets at the U U Church, 15 Pleasant St, Brunswick. Call us at 729-8747 for more info.

Wednesday nights, 7:00pm

Aroostook County Boy's Night Out! We meet in Caribou or Presque Isle every Wednesday and

have either a pot luck meal or go out to eat. Locations vary. Contact Dick for details, 498-0900 (Mon-Fri 8a-6p) or graphique@mfx.net

Friday evenings, 6:00–8:30pm

OUTRIGHT of Lewiston-Auburn meets. Contact Nancy at the AIDS Coalition of Lewiston-Auburn for details or acla@ghi.net

Friday evenings, 7:30–9:30pm

PORTLAND OUTRIGHT meets at the Cinnamon Building, 1 Pleasant St, 4th floor (enter at rear) <http://www.qrd.com/maine/outright.pwm.html>

For more complete listings check out the Maine Gaynet Calendar at <http://www.huntcal.com/cgilocal/calview.cgi/GayNet/Events>

Join Us

for the first fall meeting of the

Maine Coalition for Equal Rights

Sunday, September 19, 1–4pm
U.U. Church, 120 Park St, Bangor

- ▼ help us make some decisions on how to best organize to work together and win a civil rights referendum in November 2000.
- ▼ find out about the local groups now forming around the state
- ▼ learn some of the ways we hope to reach people who live in our own towns and neighborhoods

Become a part of the campaign now!

For more information, call Ron Hersom at 941-0969 or Janice Campbell at 625-3689