

COMMUNIQUE

Volume XIV: no. 9
octobre/October 1993

Fighting the Right in northern Maine

Aroostook County begins to organize against anti-lesbian/gay forces

A concerted organizing effort has begun in Aroostook County to counteract the right wing extremists who are attempting to limit our freedom. They wish to prohibit the enactment of any law which protects non-heterosexuals from discrimination in Maine and to repeal such existing laws in Portland and Lewiston. An Auburn-based group, "Concerned Maine Families," has organized a statewide petition drive to put such a law before voter referendum in November, 1994.

Eight people from The County attended a day-long series of "Fight the Right" workshops August 7 in Augusta. Co-sponsored by the Maine Lesbian-Gay Political Alliance and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the workshops provided guidance and education on how to organize against the growing religious right extremists and Maine's Colorado-style anti-gay petition drive in particular.

Seven of the eight Northern Lambda Nord members who attended the

August 7 workshops were present at a September 1 follow-up meeting in Presque Isle. At the Augusta workshops they had split into two groups in order to attend the different workshop sessions. Two major topics covered at these workshops were discussed at the Presque Isle meeting.

The first half of this two-hour follow-up session focused on organizing and building a stronger community, as well as coalition-building both within our community and with other supportive groups and individuals in northern Maine. The second part of the discussion reviewed how to deal with the local media, how to get our message out, and how to counter the right wing in the electronic and print media.

Consensus was easily reached on the need to get more individuals involved, whether they are NLN members or not. Some people are easily motivated,

but to reach the majority of lesbians, gaymen, and bisexuals in our rural region, a one-on-one recruitment effort must be undertaken. It is important to tap into people's individual strengths, whether it be licking stamps

members to see what kind of contribution they can make • sending out a wide-scale mailing to current, former, and some non-Lambs in order to publicize this fight-the-right campaign • creating specific committees to give



in the privacy of their kitchen, or being interviewed by WAGM on television. All contributions to this fight, no matter how small, are essential. You can be sure the religious right has no problem getting volunteers.

A list was made of the initial goals of this local campaign. These include: • contacting previous NLN Steering Committee members and past NLN

people a way they can get involved (i.e., newspaper committee which monitors all the local papers and cuts out gay/lesbian- and right wing-related articles; phone tree committee to organize phone numbers to facilitate easy and quick communication, from Madawaska to Orient) • preparing a press kit for use with the media • get to know area reporters • sending out and following up on regular press

publié par/published by NORTHERN LAMBDA NORD, Inc.

CP/POB 990 Caribou, Maine 04736-0990 USA Gay-Lesbian Phoneline/Télégal 207.498-2088 (TDD/Voice-Vois)

releases/calendar announcements (especially important is the follow-up, questioning why an item did not appear in the paper, and thanking them when it did).

Copies of videotapes of the Augusta workshop sessions will be obtained and reviewed. Highlights of the tapes will be presented at a meeting later this fall.

If you'd like to find out more about what's happening, whether you feel like getting involved or not, you're urged to attend the next meeting, Wednesday, September 22 at 6pm at the Gay-Lesbian Phonenumber in Caribou. We'll order out for pizza and discuss the next steps we need to take to fight for our rights. ▼

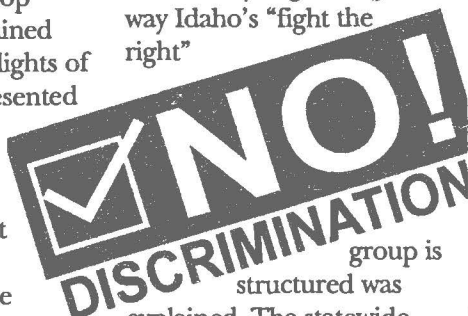
Fighting the Right in Maine

Statewide planning meeting in Bangor

Sunday, September 12 saw about 40 people from throughout Maine, including three from Aroostook County, gather at *The Rage* in Bangor. The occasion was a strategy meeting to organize a statewide effort to fight the Concerned Maine Families' petition and ballot initiative which would block the civil rights of the gay-lesbian-bisexual community in Maine. The meeting was chaired by Paula Aboud, president of the Maine

Lesbian-Gay Political Alliance.

During the four-hour gathering, ideas for the structure of a statewide organization were discussed in detail. As a model for community organizing, the way Idaho's "fight the right"



group is structured was explained. The statewide group, *Idaho Voices for Human Rights*, includes local committees such as *Boise Voices for Human Rights*, and *Pocatello Voices for Human Rights*, incorporating their local community names. Those in the supportive religious community are called, *Voices of Faith for Human Rights*. The groups' slogan is, "Don't Sign On!"

The goal of the Maine group is to make sure the ballot initiative never passes and never becomes law in this state. As part of the strategy to stop the right wing, people in every community will be recruited to make sure that on election day, November 2, if there is a CMF member at the polls asking people to sign their petition then there is someone to explain to people why they should *not* sign. Training for these volunteer poll sitters will be held after the next statewide organizing meeting, which is Saturday,

October 2, from noon-4pm at *The Rage*. ▼

Fighting the Right in Lewiston

Voters will decide on civil rights ordinance

The front line for civil rights in Maine has moved to the state's second-largest city, Lewiston. With the veto of anti-discrimination legislation by Governor John McKernan, a local referendum vote on a Lewiston anti-discrimination ordinance becomes the next battleground in the fight for equality.

The Lewiston City Council adopted an ordinance which outlaws discrimination based upon one's sexual orientation; this law is similar to one passed earlier in Portland which was then put to voter referendum. The law was upheld by city voters. Now it's Lewiston's turn.

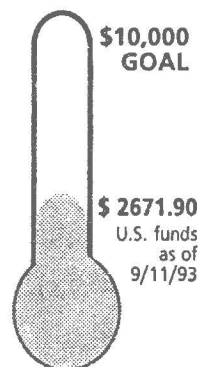
Maine is one of 12

states targeted by the extreme religious right wing for anti-gay/lesbian referenda. They think that Lewiston is just the kind of place where their "No Special Rights" argument might work. A victory for us in a blue-collar French-Catholic city such as Lewiston is a key to countering opposition to gay and lesbian civil rights in Maine. The right wing awaits the outcome of this election. A positive vote in Lewiston will send a message to the leaders of the Right in Maine and across the U.S.

The ordinance was successfully defended in Portland, the most liberal city in Maine; Lewiston is one of the most conservative.

It will be harder to win in Lewiston, but the victory will mean even more. A winning campaign costs tens of thousands of dollars. Please send any contribution you can afford today to Equal Protection Lewiston, POB 7804, Lewiston 04243-7804. ▼

EPL
Equal Protection
LEWISTON



BUILDING FUND

The NLN Building Fund is designed to raise money for a community center for this region. The center would house the phoneline, library, office, meeting space, and party space. Since NLN is a 501(c)3 group, all donations are tax-deductible on federal U.S. income tax; merely ask for a receipt. Donations of any amount - in either U.S. or Canadian funds - are greatly appreciated. ▼

Readers of Gay Publications

Wealthier and better-educated than most

Marketing surveys show that gaymen and lesbians have substantially higher household incomes than the national average, and extra-ordinary consumer demographics, giving us one of the largest blocks of disposable income in the United States. These conclusions were reached by Strub Media Group after a February 1992 survey of readership of 10 gay publications.

The household income of those lesbians and gaymen responding to the survey averaged \$63,100; the national average is \$36,500. Only 18% of Americans are college graduates but 61% of readers surveyed have a college degree. Over half of

the readers - 51% - are in professional or managerial jobs. The national average is 15.9%.

The ten members of the National Gay Newspaper Guild which surveyed their readers were *Bay Area Reporter* (San Francisco), *Bay Windows* (Boston), *Dallas Voice*, *Frontiers*, *The New Voice*, *New York (City) Native*, *Philadelphia Gay News*, *The Washington (D.C.) Blade*, *The Weekly News*, and *Windy City Times* (Chicago).

Northern Lambda Nord conducted a regional demographics survey between January and September 1992. People residing in three of the four counties in this region, Aroostook, Madawaska, and Carleton, completed surveys. Rather than household income, the NLN survey asked for individual annual gross income, which averaged \$22,300. Nearly one-

quarter of the respondents - 24% - earned under \$10,000; 4% earned over \$50,000.

The education-level in the Lambda survey showed a 50%-50% split between those with and those without a college degree. ▼

An Annual October Event

National Coming Out Day Campaign

National Coming Out Day is observed every

October 11 to help create a supportive environment for gay, lesbian, and bisexual people to come out. With "over 30 million lesbians and gaymen in America, . . . most people think they don't know anyone gay or lesbian. It is no wonder people don't



believe they can relate to us or our concerns. The price we pay for this invisibility is enormous. The poor government response to the AIDS epidemic, discrimination in employment and the military, and the perpetuation of anti-gay state ballot measures are but a few tragic examples of how costly our silence can be.

"Equality will be there for us only when we come out and show our pride. Our open participation in society is critical to our empowerment, our safety, and our well-being. For gaymen and lesbians to live in terror of being discovered is unacceptable. Future generations of gay and lesbian people count on our courage to come out now. If we don't commit to the process of coming out, anti-gay prejudice will continue. The future is up to us."

The goals of National Coming Out Day are to be visible, get political, educate

• S • I • D • A •

LES NIVEAUX DE RISQUE

LE BAISER avec échange de salive (french-kiss) ne comportent aucun risque. LES CARESSES ET LA MASTURBATION ne constituent aucun risque de transmission du VIH. LE SEXE ORAL Il est peu probable que cette pratique sexuelle puisse transmettre le VIH. LA PÉNÉTRATION ANALE ET VAGINALE non protégée par un condom constitue un haut risque de transmission du VIH, qu'il y ait éjaculation ou non. LES JOUETS SEXUELS (ex.: vibreur, godemichie) non partagés ne constituent aucun risque de transmission du virus. LÉCHER L'ANUS ne constitue pas un mode de transmission du VIH. Cependant, elle ne vous protège aucunement de l'hépatite B ou des autres MTS. ACTIVITÉS SADO-MASOCHISTES qui ne causent pas de saignements et qui n'incluent aucune autre activité à risque ne favorisent pas la transmission du VIH.

• A • I • D • S •

THE SAFER THE SEX, THE BETTER

CONSIDERED SAFE: Mutual masturbation, Hugging/body rubbing, Massage, Social (dry) kissing, Fantasy, Light S/M (without bleeding or bruising), Sex toys (when used only on yourself)

CONSIDERED POSSIBLY SAFE: Anal or vaginal intercourse with a condom, French (wet) kissing, Sucking (but stopping before climax), Watersports (external only), Cunnilingus

CONSIDERED UNSAFE: Swallowed semen, Anal or vaginal intercourse without a condom, Watersports in mouth or on skin with sores or cuts, Sharing IV needles, Fisting or rimming, Sharing enema equipment, douching equipment, or sex toys

the local community, and party. Some of the means include participating in local talk shows, handing out literature at a shopping center, an evening of letter writing to elected officials or newspapers, hosting a film event, book fair, or art show, or having a gay/lesbian entertainer: band, comic, variety show, etc. ▼

Another Annual October Event

New Membership Year Begins With Party

Dozens of people are expected to celebrate our local community Saturday, October 2 at the Caribou Country Club when Northern Lambda Nord

marks the beginning of its 14th membership year with its annual Membership Drive Party & Dance. This is the first time this annual October event will not be held in a private home, and the second Lambda-sponsored party this year at the Country Club. Doors open at 7pm (Maine)/8pm (N-B). There is a cash bar which closes at midnight (Maine)/1am (N-B). A new mix of dance music is courtesy C&J Music. Admission is \$5 (US/CDN funds) or it is free with the purchase of a 12-month membership in Northern Lambda Nord, \$15 (US/CDN). Membership includes a monthly newsletter, access to the lending library, and notification every month of all activities. Membership lists are confidential. ▼

Gay/Lesbian G·U·I·D·E Lesbienne/Gai

New Brunswick • Maine • Nouveau-Brunswick

NORTHERN LAMBDA NORD (NLN), CP/POB 990, Caribou, Maine 04736 USA

GAY-LESBIAN PHONELINE 207.498-2088 TDD/Voice - staffed Wed, 7-9pm (Maine), 8-10pm (N-B)

AROOSTOOK AREA GAY/LESBIAN AA GROUP meets Sundays, 7pm (Maine time) in Madawaska. Groupe bilingue/bilingual group. Call 207.498-2088 to make contact

▼
ACT UP/BANGOR POB 1554, 04402-1554, 207.947-3947

AIDS New Brunswick 800.561-4009
AIDSLINE/Maine 800.851-AIDS - Mon-Sat 9am-5pm, Mon & Wed till 7:30pm

AM CHOFSI Maine Jewish group, meets monthly; POB 5017, Portland 04101, 207.874-2970 (Rheatha)

APEX: A Point of Departure, published monthly by Phoenix Press, POB 4743, Portland 04112

COMMUNITY PRIDE REPORTER: The newspaper for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community of Maine, published monthly, 142 High St, Suite 634, Portland 04101, 207.879-1342

DIAL KIDS, 774-TALK for lesbian, gay, bisexual & unsure youth under 19
DIGNITY/MAINE Catholic group, POB 8113, Portland 04104

EASTERN MAINE AIDS NETWORK POB 2038, Bangor 04401-2038, 207.990-EMAN

EDMUNDSTON AREA GAYS & LESBIANS FOR EQUALITY (EAGLE) POB 611, Edmundston E3V 3L2 506.735-5029

FREDERICTON LESBIANS & GAYS (FLAG) POB 1556, Station A E3B 5G2, 506.457-2156 (Mon & Thurs 6-9pm)

FRUITS OF OUR LABORS Lesbian-Gay-Bi events calendar published monthly, POB 125, Belfast ME 04915

GAZETTE For Lesbians & Gay Men in Atlantic Canada, published 10 times yearly, POB 34090, Scotia Square, Halifax, NS B3J 3S1

GAIS & LESBIENNES DE MONCTON/ GAYS & LESBIANS OF MONCTON (GLM) CP/POB 1072, Riverview E1B 1V0, 506.855-8064

GAIS NOR GAYS (GNG) CP/POB 983, Bathurst E2A 4H8

GAY/LESBIAN ALLIANCE University of Southern Maine, 88 Winslow Street, Portland 04103, 207.874-6596

GAY/LESBIAN COMMUNITY NETWORK POB 212, Bangor 04401, 207.862-5907/941-2189

GAY/LESBIAN/BISEXUAL PARENTS SUPPORT GROUP Portland, 207.772-4741 (Frank)

HARBOR MASTERS, INC. leather-levi group, POB 4044, Portland 04104

INTEGRITY Episcopalian group, St. Matthew's Church, 18 Union Street, Hallowell 04347, 207.622-6631

LESBIAN/GAY COMMITTEE, MAINE CHAPTER, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS POB 5112, Station A, Portland 04102

MAINE BISEXUAL PEOPLE'S NETWORK POB 10818, Portland 04104

MAINE LESBIAN-GAY POLITICAL ALLIANCE POB 232, Hallowell 04347

NEW BRUNSWICK COALITION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS REFORM/LA COALITION POUR LA RÉFORME DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE DU NOUVEAU-BRUNSWICK POB/CP

1556, Station/Succursale A, Fredericton E3B 5G2 506.457-2156

NO BORDERS/SANS FRONTIÈRES POB/CP 461, Campbellton, NB E3N 3G4

OUTRIGHT: Portland Alliance of Gay & Lesbian Youth, age 22 and under, POB 5028, Station A, Portland 04102, 800.339-4042

OUTRIGHT CENTRAL MAINE for age 22 & younger, every Fri, 7:30pm 1st Unitarian Church, Pleasant St, Auburn; POB 802, Auburn 04212, 800.339-4042

OUTRIGHT TOO Bangor area Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual youth group, c/o POB 212, Bangor 04401

PWA (People With AIDS) COALITION OF MAINE 377 Cumberland Avenue, Portland 04101, 207.773-8500
SIDA Nouveau-Brunswick 800.561-4009

TIME OUT outdoor activities, monthly calendar, POB 11502, Portland, ME 04104

WOMY's GROUP POB 20082, Fredericton E3B 6Y8, 506.457-2156



THE RAGE 123 Franklin Street, downtown Bangor 947-1213

COMMUNIQUE publié dix fois par année par **NORTHERN LAMBDA NORD**, une organisation pour la communauté gaie-lesbienne-bisexuelle au nord-ouest du Nouveau Brunswick et au nord du Maine (les comtés Madawaska-Victoria-Carleton-Aroostook). **ABONNEMENTS** - 10\$ par année. **COTISATION NLN** - 15\$ par année, dans lequel inclus la subscription. Les fond E-U et canadiennes sont acceptés au par. Ceux qui ont de la difficulté financièrement, des paiements à terme peut être organisée. NLN est une organisation à but non-lucratif; toutes donations sont taxe deductible aux E-U seulement. Les tarifs de publicité dans le **COMMUNIQUE** sont disponible. Vos commentaires et contributions sont les bienvenue.

COMMUNIQUE is published ten times yearly by **NORTHERN LAMBDA NORD**, an organization serving the gay-lesbian-bisexual community of northern Maine and northwestern New Brunswick (Aroostook-Madawaska-Victoria-Carleton counties). **SUBSCRIPTIONS** - \$10 per year. **NLN MEMBERSHIP** - \$15 per year, which includes a subscription. U.S. and Canadian funds are accepted at par. Low-income people may make arrangements to pay in installments. NLN is a non-profit organization; all donations are U.S. tax-deductible. Advertising rates in **COMMUNIQUE** are available upon request. Your comments and contributions are welcome.