

# COMMUNIQUÉ

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Caribou Unitarians' Answer To Gays & Lesbians

## No! No! No! A Thousand Times No!

by Dick Harrison, New Sweden

*At a recent meeting of the Church members, a decision was made to allow only church organizations to use the Church facilities. Therefore, you will not be able to conduct your meetings at the Church.*

This was the turtledove response to a request from Northern Lambda Nord to hold our monthly meetings at the Caribou Unitarian Universalist Church building. This culminates

central, regular location for one of our activities. It had seemed logical to request support from what is the most gay-positive congregation in North America, the Unitarian-Universalists. For at least 20 years they have had an "Office of Lesbian-Gay Concerns" at their Boston headquarters; they welcome gay and lesbian clergy; they perform gay commitment ceremonies/weddings. Caribou's UUA congregation seemed a natural ally in the struggle for gay liberation, equality, and freedom.

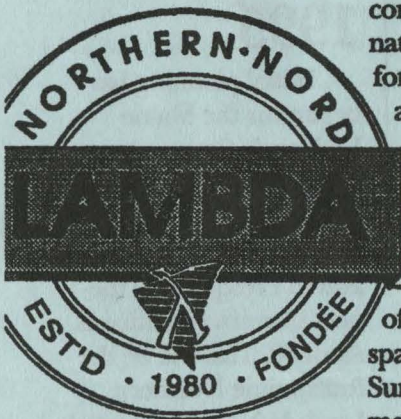
In December 1991, a written request (not our first) was made to the Caribou UUA Board of Directors for use of a space for NLN's monthly Sunday afternoon meetings. In the January-February 1992 church bulletin, Rev. Sydney Wilde wrote that "a small minority [of the congregation] strongly opposed the use of our facilities by the Gay group. Some even threatened to leave the church and take their pledge with them. . . . Another small minority were appalled that we

would even question the appropriateness of the group meeting in our church. They were shocked that we would ignore our principles: 'to affirm and support the inherent worth and dignity of every person.' . . . The vast majority said, in effect, 'Any of those individuals are welcome to visit our church, participate in our programs and become members of our congregation, but I do not want the group to meet in our building for fear of community backlash, and possible harassment or vandalism.'"

In a February 29, 1992 letter to NLN, congregation president Philip Ring, and Rev. Sydney Wilde noted that the church "Board (out of concern for splitting the church) voted 6 to 3 to: 1) deny the request of Northern Lambda Nord to meet in the church at this time, and to 2) undertake an education program in an attempt to dispel the fears, misinformation and stereotyping which lead to homophobia. The education program has begun with the possibility of some future policy changes arising out of the discussion."

It was felt that after almost two years of "education" NLN should repeat our request for meeting space at the Caribou UUA Church. So in December 1993 we wrote again. Don Collins, former Maine state senator from central Aroostook and current congregation president, responded, asking for a meeting between Lambda representatives and the church Board to answer some of their questions.

So on Thursday, March 3, 1994, the NLN director and I sat with the 10 or so Board members and their current minister to assure them that they had nothing to fear from us. The meeting was truly an eye-opener. It was easy to tell the supportive Board members from the ignorant homophobes, even before they opened their mouths. Don Collins seemed very concerned that one of Maine's gay-lesbian newspapers, *Community Pride Reporter*, was actually available at Mr. Paperback, free of charge, right here in Caribou for anyone to pick up! And the question of youth involvement in NLN was raised, perhaps with more than a taint of fear of "recruitment". But I found the scariest question came



what has been years of "education" and discussion between northern Maine's only gay-lesbian-bisexual organization and what is certainly the most - and perhaps the only - homophobic Unitarian-Universalist congregation in North America.

For some time, Lambda has been trying to establish at least one

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

from a man sitting to my right. He was confused by the repeated use of the term, "homophobia"; he was totally unaware of its meaning, believing it to mean fear of men ("homo" meaning man rather than "homo" meaning opposite). It was scary to realize that the person asking that question (I didn't know who he was at the time) was actually the UUA minister!

One church member, Mrs. Bud Ayer, felt that the split in the congregation over whether to be gay-supportive or not, a split which may result in the ultimate dissolution of the Caribou church, was Lambda's fault; if we hadn't asked to meet there in the first place then things would be just fine!

The NLN director received more than one phonecall the next day from supportive church Board members. They said that we, the Lambda representatives, had presented ourselves with pride and dignity, and had made the homophobes look really foolish.

So this is probably the end of the UUA-NLN relationship for the foreseeable future. Talk on the street is that the Caribou congregation will soon be too small to support their church ("The First Church Building in Caribou") and that a new UUA congregation may form in Presque Isle, one which may live up to the precepts of their creed, "to affirm and support the

inherent worth and dignity of every person." ▼

#### NLN Parties

## Dances Every Month?

There used to be a gay bar in this area. It was called *Club Equality*. It was run by a Lambda member in the tiny town of Sainte-Anne-de-Madawaska, a community of only 2,500 people located between St-Léonard and Edmundston. Since the bar closed several years ago, the only gay places to dance have been the few events sponsored by EAGLE, a group based

October. If the price is right, and attendance covers the cost, it may be possible to have more dances during the winter, though not necessarily at the Country Club (they close from November through April). ▼

#### Halifax To Host Regional Event

## Atlantic Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual Conference

The dates are October 7, 8 & 9, 1994, the Canadian Thanksgiving and

Getting AIDS is like being told you were exposed to asbestos in the high school you went to, learning years later it can cause cancer. It's retroactive. Nobody knew at the time. It was all bad luck. An accident. - *unknown*

in Edmundston which has since folded, and parties hosted by Northern Lambda Nord. The NLN steering committee has been discussing our options, and they are few. The most popular venue for our events is the Caribou Country Club, where our May anniversary and October membership drive parties are held. From 50-60 people usually attend those dances.

The steering committee is currently negotiating with the Caribou Country Club to hold a dance every month from June through

the steering committee is requesting workshop proposals and facilitators on a wild range of topics, including Coming Out, Exploring Our Sexualities, Queer Theatre/Performance, Humour, Censorship & Freedom of Expression, Youth, Rural Identity, People of Colour, Activism and You, a Queer Game Show, and Dating 101.

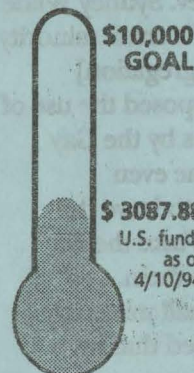
If you are interested or have suggestions, please submit your proposals by June 15th. You should contact the Programme Committee, *We Are Everywhere '94*, 5280 Green Street, P.O. Box 27043, Halifax NS B3H 4M8. ▼

#### Maine Conference

## Symposium 1995

Initial planning has begun for the Maine Lesbian & Gaymen's Symposium 1995. The first of what will be monthly meetings was held April 2nd in Presque Isle; the next planning meeting is April 30. This will be the fourth time Northern Lambda Nord has hosted this state's annual

U.S. Columbus Day weekend. The place is Halifax, Nova Scotia. The event is "We Are Everywhere '94", this year's Atlantic regional conference. The planning began in December, and



## 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. ▼

gathering. The first three were in 1986, 1989, and 1992. There has been a rotation among us in northern Maine, folks in the southern (Portland area) part of the state, and people in central/midcoast regions (Bangor-Orono-Unity). Symposium XX was at Unity College near Waterville in 1993; there still is no word whether anyone in southern Maine is hosting Symposium XXI this year.

If you are not already, put your name on the Symposium '95 mailing list by writing to Symposium, POB 990, Caribou, ME 04736-0990. You'll receive registration information in early 1995. ▼

#### Women's Music in Maine

## Two Festivals, One Weekend

Two events in June will

offer music, dancing, and more for women. *Springfest '94* and *Maine-ly For You Womyn's Music Festival* are both scheduled for June 2-5.

*Springfest '94* will feature Cris Williamson & Tret Fure and Pixie Lauer & Diana Hansen, all Friday, June 3. Saturday, June 4th's headliner is Lucie Blue Tremblay. Organizers promise "music, comedy, arts, crafts center, workshops, dance, sports, games & much more." The cost is \$35 per person which includes all activities, concerts, and the dance; campsites and motel rooms are available, but space is limited. Concert tickets only are \$15 each in advance; no tickets will be sold at the door. This event is at a private campground in Lincolnville Beach, near Camden, Maine. For more information: C-P-J. Productions, POB 188, Norway, ME 04268, 207/539-8619.

The *Maine-ly For You Womyn's Music Festival* has these performers scheduled: Suede, The Lesbian Lounge Lizards, Leah Zicari, Erica Wheeler, Smith & Bakken, Laura Berkson, and DJ Deb. The four-day event will include "two concerts, two dances, workshops, two-step and line dancing, vendors, softball, volleyball, and an open mic stage." Tickets are \$40 per person; accommodations are extra. Camping, camping cabins, and housekeeping cabins are available. This concert will be at a private campground in western Maine. For more information *before May 1st*: *Maine-ly For You*, 114 Bennet Avenue, Auburn, ME 04210, 207/782-2275. *After May 1*: *Maine-ly For You*, RR2 Box 745, Harrison ME 04040, 207/583-6980. ▼

#### In NLN's Lending Library

## More Space

Northern Lambda  
Nord's lending library,

*Bibliothèque Lambda*, has not received any new books since last month. Efforts continue to get the entire collection of nearly 1,000 volumes into the computer so that each member may have a listing of all the books which are available for check-out. Monthly "library days" are held to accomplish this. At the last library day, the shelving spaces were rearranged to make better use of the limited space in the library, i.e. have room for more than two people in the library at one time. Wayne, who has volunteered to take over responsibilities as librarian, has taken charge and, with Ray's help, moved the bookcases and rearranged the books. Meanwhile, four other volunteers sorted through the boxes of files and saved only the necessary and useful materials. Fewer than 100 books now remain to be catalogued in the computer. A type of pocket card will be placed in each book

# • 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, godemiché) 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

to be used when materials are checked out. A library policy of rules, procedures, and fines has been prepared by the Steering Committee for presentation to and adoption by the membership. Anyone wishing to volunteer to help with the organizing of the library is encouraged to attend the next Library Day and Pot Luck Meal on Saturday, May 21 starting at 1pm (Maine)/2pm (N-B). ▼

### What's Going On?

## Calendar!

For more information on these and other NLN events, call the Gay-Lesbian Phoneline, 207/498-2088, Wednesdays 7-9pm (Maine time).

• **Tues, Apr 26, 7pm - Guest Speaker Betty Denniston**, author of "A Caregiver's Guide; A Labor of Love"

## Gay/Lesbian G·U·I·D·E Lesbienne/Gai

**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

shares her experiences caring for her son who died of AIDS, at Yusef's Restaurant, Caribou

• **Sat, Apr 30, 3pm -**

**Symposium '95 Meeting session #2**, Presque Isle

• **Sat, May 7, 7pm-1am - NLN 14th Anniversary Party & Dance** Caribou Country Club

• **Sun, May 15, 3pm - NLN Meeting** Lions Community Center, High Street, Caribou, across from Shop & Save

• **Sat, May 21, 1pm/6pm -**

**Library Time/Pot Luck Meal** in New Sweden

• **Wed, May 25, 7pm - Fold & Stuff** the newsletter & calendar, at the Phoneline in Caribou

• **Sat, June 11 - ? Dance ?** at the Caribou Country Club?

• **Sun, June 12, 3pm - NLN Meeting** ▼



**THE RAGE 123 Franklin Street, downtown Bangor 947-1213**

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**COMMUNIQUÉ** 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 **COMMUNIQUÉ** are available upon request. Your comments and contributions are welcome.

## New Brunswick • Maine • Nouveau-Brunswick

**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

**FREDERICTON LESBIANS & GAYS (FLAG)** POB 1556, Station A E38 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

**GAISES 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 LAW ASSOCIATION (LeGal)** POB 443, Portland 04112, 207.829-3379

**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

**1026:** Maine's monthly newspaper for lesbians & gay men, POB 10536, Portland 04104

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

**WOMYN'S GROUP** POB 20082, Fredericton E3B 6Y8, 506.457-2156