

COMMUNIQUÉ

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FROM THE NLN DIRECTOR

The Fourth R

by Jim Fotter, Director

"Look both ways before crossing the street!" "Put your coat on; you'll catch pneumonia." "Don't talk to strangers!" "Wait an hour after you eat before you go swimming."

These are but a few of the messages with which many of us are familiar. Having heard these things from our parents, I suspect some of us may have used them on our own children or on children whom we know. Most of these cautions were given to protect us from some real or imagined injury or hurt.

In school, many of us learned lessons beyond the "three-Rs." Perhaps some of

us were scolded for failing to conform when coloring the apples green and the leaves red, or for coloring "outside the lines." Some of us may have been laughed at by classmates for giving a wrong answer. Others may have experienced harsh retribution for daring to challenge authority. We quickly learned the Fourth R: *Any action where we assert our individuality is a risk that will jeopardize our safety.*

As adults, we hear a new set of messages that are supposed to protect our well-being: "Wear Your Safety Belt!" "Don't Drink and Drive." "Practice Safe Sex!" In the workplace we are told, "Don't

Rock the Boat." While many of these messages are

practical and indeed critical to our continued survival, we sometimes also assume that it is better to take no risks and thus remain safe.

I'll wager that few of us forget the visual image of *ABC's Wide World of Sports* where the opening scene graphically portrays the skier tumbling down the ski jump with the accompanying phrase, "the agony of defeat." None of us felt compelled to cheer the skier for having the courage to risk going down the ramp in the first place; he was labeled a failure. It's easier to applaud risk-takers when they succeed than when they fail.

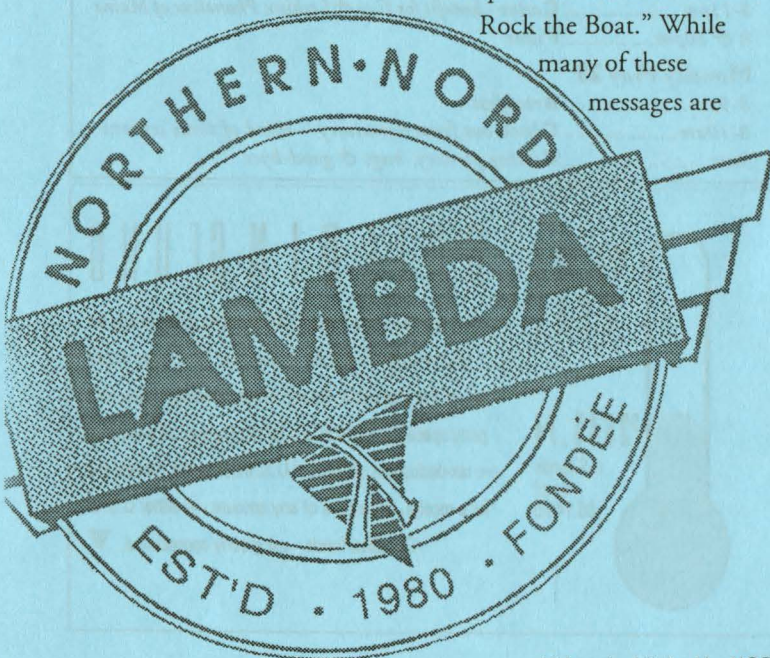
I don't need to tell you the risks that we face as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people. Many of the choices we face appear to be a lose-lose situation. By coming out to family, friends, and the workplace, we risk the loss of acceptance, the ability to earn a living, and most importantly, love. We risk the very real danger of physical harm. But by failing to come out we risk being placed in a situation where we are unable to have fulfilled relationships or to experience intimacy. We risk the passage of an anti-gay

initiative because of the danger associated with "being political." So, many of us choose to do nothing and are – in effect – paralyzed by inaction as the apparent best of worst-case scenarios. Yet we may also learn that risk-taking can mean an opportunity to grow.

We are making individual and group victories on a daily basis. Some of you have risked coming out to yourselves (a very big step) and to others who are important in your lives. Because of our collective risks, we have a Community Center, the only one of its kind in Maine. One of our members recently risked exposure by talking publicly about the danger of hatred and gay-bashing in our communities. (*Article follows - ed.*)

I'd like to propose that each of us takes a step in breaking the cycle of risk paralysis. Symposium XXI will be held at the University of Maine at Presque Isle from May 26-29, Memorial Day Weekend. Take a risk and attend all or part of the conference. Your participation will help all of us grow individually and as a family! Hope to see you there! Be well!

/s/ Jim ▼



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BASHING VICTIM SPEAKS OUT

I Testified in Augusta

by Randy Ireland

On Monday, May 1, I received a phone call from Karen Geraghty, President of the Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance. Hearings before the Maine Legislature's Judiciary Committee were scheduled for the next afternoon, May 2. Committee members would listen to presentations about the pending bill to limit civil rights protections in Maine to those groups who are already included, which would mean prohibiting passage of any future non-discrimination protection for gays and lesbians. Karen said they had had someone scheduled to testify about being a victim of a hate crime, but that person had backed out at the last minute. She knew I had been bashed at Northern Maine Technical College in Presque Isle; would I come down to Augusta and testify? I agreed, and after a lot of phone calls back and forth, we got everything arranged and I was ready to go to Augusta.

I had never been to Augusta before; as a matter of fact I had never been outside Aroostook County, so this was going to be quite an experience! I caught the 7:25am bus out of Presque Isle and got more nervous the further south I went. I was picked up at the bus station in Bangor at 11:30am and continued my journey south.

I don't think reality started

setting in until we actually arrived in Augusta. Then I hoped that nobody from Aroostook County would be there. I thought if I would have seen someone I knew that I would die.

When I got inside the Augusta Civic Center I was amazed. I had never seen a place so big before, and I had never seen so many gay and lesbian people before in my entire life. I found Karen, and she told me I was the fourth speaker for our side, but it would be at least an hour before I was scheduled to speak. I became even more nervous as the time to speak got closer.

Finally, it was my turn to speak. (*Complete text of Randy's speech follows - ed.*) I couldn't believe I was actually going up to the podium and telling my story. I started by introducing myself and what school I attended. Then I named my attacker and briefly told of my attack. Then I told about the injuries I sustained as a result of the assault, and about the lawsuit that was filed on my behalf by the Attorney General's Office. I then said that I thought that L.D. 310 should not be passed.

While I was up there talking, I didn't hear a sound. I was so nervous I had to stop talking twice and try to calm down. When I finished talking and turned around to go back to my seat, I was on the verge of tears. Then I noticed that everybody (on our side) was standing up and applauding. Then a reporter

Symposium XXI SCHEDULE

subject to change

Friday May 26

- 6:30-11:30pm Conference registration & Dormitory registration - first of three sessions
- 7-11:30pm Light hors d'œuvres
- Meet & greet old & new friends
- 7:30 & 9:15pm Films

Saturday May 27

- 7:30-9am Conference registration & Dormitory registration - second of three sessions
- 7:30-8:30am Breakfast
- 8:45-10am Opening plenary, Keynote Mary Bonauto
- 10:15am-noon Workshops - period one
- 10:15am Films
- noon-1pm Lunch
- noon Films
- 12:30-1:30pm Conference registration & Dormitory registration - third of three sessions
- 1:15-3pm Workshops - period two
- 1:15pm Films
- 3:15-5pm Workshops - period three
- 3:15pm Films
- 5:30-7pm Italian buffet supper
- 7:30-9pm Concert: comic Karen Williams, plus The Maritones
- 9pm-1am Dance
- 9 & 11pm Films

Sunday May 28

- Early morning Nature walk; Spiritual gatherings
- 9:30-11am Brunch
- 10:30-11am Check-out from dormitory - first of three sessions
- 11:15am-12:15pm Keynote Tuma Young
- 12:30-2:30pm Panel discussion/Town Meeting
- 1-4pm Women's Clinic - Cancer screening
- 3pm Films, games, free time; repeated & unscheduled workshops
- 4-6pm Check-out from dormitory - second of three sessions
- 6pm Barbecue supper
- 8-11pm Casino - benefit for Gay & Lesbian Phoneline of Maine
- 8 & 10pm Films

Monday May 29

- 8-9am Breakfast
- 8-10am Check-out from dormitory - third of three sessions
- 9am Closing plenary, hugs & good-byes



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. ▼

came over and asked for my last name and what school I went to.

The person who spoke after me was Steve Wessler of the Attorney General's Office. He was the one who handled my lawsuit. He even mentioned me during his speech. Even *I* was impressed by that. Right after he spoke, I had to leave for Bangor to catch the bus back to Presque Isle. I would say that this has to be one of the most exciting experiences I have ever had, but I am not sure I would ever want to do it again! ▼

The following is the text of the statement made by Randy Ireland before the Judiciary Committee of the Maine Legislature, Tuesday, May 2, 1995.

My name is Randy Ireland. I

am a student at Northern Maine Technical College in Presque Isle, Maine.

On January 24th of this year, I was attacked by Robert Tozier, who was also a student here at the time. The attack occurred at the Student Lounge where I worked. Mr. Tozier was drunk at the time and refused to follow the rules for being in the Lounge. The attack occurred when I tried to call Security to have him removed from the building. During the course of the assault, I was strangled and thrown on a desk three times. Mr. Tozier also yelled obscenities at me the entire time like, "You are just a faggot and not worth shit to me," and, "You are nothing but a faggot and a queer and are worth nothing to

me." He also tried to provoke me into a fight; then he threatened to throw me through a window if I tried to defend myself.

As a result of my assault, I was taken to the Emergency Room and treated for bruises on my neck and back. I also had to move off campus for a week (at the school's request) because some of Mr. Tozier's friends had made threats against me. Other things that have happened as a result of my assault are that I will not go out at night off campus if I have to walk somewhere. April 15th was the first time I tried and I got very nervous and scared after about five minutes outside alone. I also went out and bought pepper spray the next

day and I carry it with me everywhere I go, even during the daytime.

On February 7th, a lawsuit was filed on my behalf by the Maine Attorney General's Office against my attacker, Robert Tozier. He was tried and convicted of a hate crime in early February. I would feel less safe in the State of Maine if the current law were not in place. I think the entire gay and lesbian community in the State of Maine should have the same opportunity I did to sue their attacker and ensure their rights are protected.

I urge you to send L.D. 310 to the Legislature with a strong "ought not to pass" recommendation so that Hate Crimes protections will not be repealed. ▼

FIRST MEETING WAS JANUARY 1980

Lambda is 15.3 Years Old

by Dick Harrison, editor, *Communiqué*

Northern Lambda Nord is Maine's oldest, and New Brunswick's second-oldest community-based organization for lesbians, gaymen, bisexuals, transgendered people – for anyone and everyone who supports the purposes and goals of the group as stated in the constitution.

A small news item was placed in the *Bangor Daily News* and in the *St. John Valley Times* in their January 3, 1980 editions. The notice elicited several

responses, and 13 people were at the first meeting in Van Buren: 12 men and one woman. Half of those in attendance were francophone/bilingual New Brunswickers. The group had initially been called "Aroostook Lambda"; the three organizers – one man from Van Buren and two from Fort Kent – had not anticipated the large Canadian turn-out. At the following meeting in February, the name

Gay group formed
CARIBOU — A new organization has been formed to serve the needs of the gay community in Northern Maine and Western New Brunswick. Known as Aroostook Lambda, it hopes to reach those lesbians and gay men in this area who feel isolated and alone — who feel that they are "the only one". Aroostook Lambda will provide mutual support ofr gays and will be available to answer questions — both from gays and non-gays alike. The address is Aroostook Lambda, PO box 990, Caribou, 04736.

was changed to better reflect the geographic location and linguistic diversity of the participants.

NLN is officially a bilingual and international organization. The constitution is in both English and French. This newsletter includes notices and articles (when someone submits them) in both languages. Who else accepts Canadian money at par?

Yet as reflected by the first meeting, Northern Lambda Nord does not have many women members. This seems the opposite of groups in the southern part of Maine, where the women are the activists. The Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance was founded by Dale McCormick who was their first president. Maine Won't Discriminate is lead by a woman attorney from the Maine Civil Liberties Union (Pat Peard); another woman attorney from Boston (Mary Bonauto) leads Maine Won't's court battles against the anti-gay referendum; and another woman (Jessica Maurer) is Maine Won't's interim coordinator; the 1993 Symposium organizing committee was predominantly women from the mid-coast area.

Is it something in the air that creates this north-south difference? Or are the men in the south and the women in the north not very interested in joining these groups? Here in the north NLN has offered opportunities for all people, both women and men, to become involved in the activities. Any comments? ▼

CalendrierNorthernLambdaNordCalendar

THE FOLLOWING EVENTS ARE HELD AT THE GAY-LESBIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTER OF NORTHERN MAINE, 398 SOUTH MAIN ST., CARIBOU, ACROSS FROM THE NYLANDER MUSEUM, 207.498-2088 (M=MAINE TIME, N=NEW BRUNSWICK TIME)

- SECOND SUNDAY of the month: NLN Meetings - June 11, July 9 3-5pm(M) 4-6pm(N)
- EVERY TUESDAY: Gay & Lesbian AA Meeting 7:30-8:30pm (M) 8:30-9:30pm(N) (No meeting May 23; Summer break starts June 20; meetings resume Sept 12)

- EVERY WEDNESDAY: Community Center Drop-In & Open House 7-9pm(M) 8-10pm(N)
- FIRST FRIDAY of the month: First Friday Fabulous FILM Festival 8pm(M) 9pm(N) June 2: To Be Announced
- THIRD FRIDAY of the

month: Women's Night 7pm(M) 8pm(N) - May 19, June 16; no summer events; resumes Sept 15

THE FOLLOWING EVENTS ARE HELD AT OTHER LOCATIONS

- Maine Lesbian & Gaymen's Symposium XXI May 26-29, 1995, University of Maine at Presque Isle

- Concert featuring comic Karen Williams, plus The Maritones, 8 voices of the Maine Gay Men's Chorus, Sat, May 27, 7:30pm(M) 8:30pm(N), Weiden Auditorium, U of Maine at Presque Isle, \$5 admission
- NLN 15th Anniversary DANCE Sat, May 27, 9pm(M) 10pm(N), Campus

- Center, U of Maine at Presque Isle, cash bar, \$5 admission
- Casino Night Sun, May 28, 8pm(M) 9pm(N) Campus Center, U of Maine at Presque Isle, prizes; \$5 admission
- Volleyball & BBQ Sat, June 10, 4pm(M) 5pm(N), in Caribou

Lesbian-GayGUIDELesbienne-Gai

NEW BRUNSWICK • MAINE • NOUVEAU-BRUNSWICK

NORTHERN LAMBDA NORD (NLN), CP/POB 990, Caribou ME 04736-0990 USA 207.498-2088 TTY/V

GAY-LESBIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTER of Northern Maine 398 South Main Street, Caribou; mailing address: POB 990, Caribou 04736-0990; 207.498-2088 TTY/Voice

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

GAY/LESBIAN AA meets Tuesdays, 7:30pm (Maine)/ 8:30pm (N-B) at Gay-Lesbian Community Services Center of Northern Maine, 398 South Main Street, Caribou; Call 207.498-2088 to make contact

• REGIONAL GROUPS/GROUPES REGIONALS

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

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

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

GAY/LESBIAN COMMUNITY NETWORK POB 212, Bangor 04401, 207.862-5907, 207.941-2189

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

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

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

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

• HEALTH/SANTÉ

AIDS New Brunswick 800.561-4009

AIDSLine/Maine 800.851-AIDS - Mon-Sat 9am-5pm, Mon & Wed till 7:30pm

ATLANTIC FIRST NATIONS AIDS TASK FORCE POB 47049, Halifax B3K 2B0 800.565-4255, 506.492-4255

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

PWA (People living with AIDS) COALITION OF MAINE 377 Cumberland Avenue, Portland 04101, 207.773-8500

HEALTH 1st Anonymous HIV testing 1.800.432-7881

SIDA/AIDS MONCTON 100 Arden Street, Suite 427, EIC 8R3, 506.859-9616

SIDA Nouveau-Brunswick 800.561-4009

• MEDIA/MEDIAS

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

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

GAZETTE for Lesbians & Gay Men in Atlantic Canada, 10 issues/year, POB 34090, Scotia Square, Halifax NS B3J 3S1

10%: Maine's monthly newspaper for lesbians & gay men, POB 10536, Portland 04104

• YOUTH/JEUNESSE

DIAL KIDS, 207.774-TALK for lesbian, gay, bisexual & unsure youth under 19

OUTRIGHT/Central Maine age 22 and younger, 1.800.339-4042

OUTRIGHT/Portland POB 5077, 04101, 207.774-TALK or 207.774-HELP

OUTRIGHT TOO Bangor area, ages 16-22, 207.285-7180

• UNIVERSITY/UNIVERSITÉ

GAY & LESBIAN ALLIANCE University of New Brunswick, c/o Help Centre, UNB SUB, POB 4400, Fredericton E3B 5A3, 506.457-2156

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

WILDE-STEIN CLUB University of Maine, Orono, every Thursday, 6:30pm, Sutton Lounge in Memorial Union

• **SUPPORT GROUPS/GROUPES SOUTIENS GAY/LESBIAN/BISEXUAL PARENTS SUPPORT GROUP** Portland, 207.772-4741 (Frank)

MAINE BISEXUAL PEOPLE'S NETWORK POB 10818, Portland 04104

PARENTS & FRIENDS OF LESBIANS & GAYS (P-FLAG), Bangor/Brewer area 207.989-5180

• RELIGION

AM CHOFSHI Jewish, meets monthly, c/o Horowitz & Kass, RR#1 Box 686, South Harpswell 04079, 207.874-2970 (Rheatha)

DIGNITY/MAINE Catholic, POB 8113, Portland 04104

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

NEW HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH c/o Unitarian House, 749 Charlotte Street, Fredericton, 506.457-4675

• PROFESSIONAL/PROFESSIONNEL

LESBIAN/GAY COMMITTEE, MAINE CHAPTER, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL

WORKERS POB 5112, Station A, Portland 04102

MAINE GAY VISUAL ARTIST'S LEAGUE 207.775-3420

MAINE LESBIAN & GAY LAW ASSOCIATION (LeGal) POB 443, Portland 04112, 207.829-3379

• POLITICAL ACTION/ACTION DE SOUTIEN

MAINE LESBIAN-GAY POLITICAL ALLIANCE POB 232, Hallowell 04347 800.55-MLGPA (556-5472)

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

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Rédacteur en chef: Dick Harrison

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Editor: Dick Harrison