

Northern Lambda Nord Communiqué

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Last month's Communiqué focused, among other topics, on the ever-spreading disease known as AIDS - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Since that issue was mailed, we have learned that a member of Northern Lambda Nord has been diagnosed with AIDS. Jack, from Fort Kent, had just arrived in California to accept a job offer. He had been ill before he left and was examined by physicians in California. Jack is now in hospital receiving what treatment is available. The diagnosis is not good. NLN is having a fundraising dance April 27 in Presque Isle. to raise funds to help Jack.

☐ SEXUAL ORIENTATION AMENDMENT IN MAINE LEGISLATURE

A bill to amend the Maine Human Rights Act to include the term "sexual orientation" in the list of minorities protected against discrimination is making its way through the Maine Senate and House. The next step is a hearing before the Judiciary Committee, which will make a recommendation "ought to pass" or "ought not to pass" or a third, non-committal recommendation. Lobbying efforts throughout the state have included local "teas"; one was held in Aroostook County last month. The next phase of lobbying is on the individual level. We must each call or write our two representatives AT LEAST ONCE (the Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance recommends three calls or letters before May 1). Our Senators and House members hear from those people who are against the bill but rarely hear from those of us who are in favor of the bill. All Aroostook County Lambs have enclosed in this newsletter a paper with the name, address and telephone number of your two Augusta legislators. Call them today--write them a letter! Urge them to vote for the bill!

☐ PUBLIC TELEVISION PROGRAM ABOUT ELDERLY GAYMEN & LESBIANS

The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) in the US will air a program entitled, "Silent Pioneers" Friday, May 10, 10:30-11pm Eastern time. According to a PBS press release, "During the past two decades, record numbers of gays and lesbians have 'come out of the closet,' publicly acknowledging their sexual preferences (sic). While this predominantly youthful gay community has achieved considerable visibility, there remains a large group of elderly homosexuals in America who have lived their lives as 'silent pioneers,' quietly paving the way for a younger, more vocal generation." The program will feature profiles of eight women and men including a male couple who have been together for 54 years; an 84-year-old former monk-turned-rancher who made peace with being Catholic and gay; a black great-grandmother who openly shares her lesbianism with her family; a feisty ex-waitress from Chicago who first connected with other lesbians only after her lover of 58 years died in 1978; and members of the New York City group SAGE, Senior Action in a Gay Environment. Check with MPBN television in Maine to verify the date and time. You may call them at 800-432-7831.

☐ GANG - GAY ATLANTIC NEWS GROUP

A group of lesbian and gay journalists in Atlantic Canada have joined forces to form the Gay Atlantic News Group or GANG. Their goal is to facilitate communications and exchange of information within the region and so provide a free monthly news service to national and local gay periodicals as well as to the student press. Current members of GANG are from Halifax and St. John's. Their news service is provided to *The Body Politic* (Toronto), *GAEzette* (Halifax), *FLAGmag* (Fredericton), *LIGHTHOUSE* (Saint John), *GAIN* (St. John's), the Dalhousie University *GAZETTE*, and Communiqué. If you are interested in more information about the GANG, you may contact them through NLN; mail will be forwarded.

ATLANTIC GAY AND LESBIAN PROFESSIONALS MEET by Elizabeth Donovan (GANG)

Offering mutual support and an accepting environment, Atlantic gay and lesbian professionals from social, health, and human services met for the first time in Halifax March 30-31. Sitting in a circle, sharing coming-out anecdotes, social workers, lawyers, nurses, and school teachers spoke of the fear, anger, and hope when working in a predominantly homophobic work environment. "It makes a difference if you can come out to your co-workers and boss. People take it for granted they can talk about their relationships. For many gay and lesbian professionals, that support system is not there," says Ken Belanger, a social worker for gay and lesbian clients.

It's this lack of support and separateness that drove Belanger to look into the possibility of an Atlantic Gay and Lesbian seminar. Coordinated with Susan Bailey, the seminar interested 14 individuals from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. The group will meet again in May. For more information, contact NLN and your mail will be forwarded.

UPCOMING EVENTS

General business meeting

Sunday, April 21 in Presque Isle at 1pm (Maine), 2pm (N-B). Agenda includes the fundraising dance for Jack; preparing the summer calendar of events; discussion of both the 1985 and 1986 Maine Symposia. Pot luck meal follows the meeting.

Dance, Saturday, April 27 in

Presque Isle, a benefit. Donation, \$4 for NLN members and guests. US and Canadian funds at par; cash bar will accept Canadian money at about a 25% discount.

May business meeting is planned for Sunday, May 12 -- location needed!

Symposium XII - May 17-19 in Portland.

International Gay-Lesbian Association Convention in Toronto, June 30-July 7.

Maine Lesbian/Gay Political

Alliance monthly meeting in Arrostook. This will be a weekend activity, August 2-4. The MLGPA meeting will be the focus of the weekend, but there will be a barbeque, brunch, and Saturday night dance. Details forthcoming.



CORRECTION

When last month's *Communiqué* was printed (Vol. VI: no. 3), the photocopier did not pick up the very top line of type on page three. The article, *National Gay/Lesbian Groups Respond to Blood Test for HTLV-III/LAV*, was confusing. The first paragraph should read:

A coalition of U.S. gay/lesbian and AIDS service organizations recommend that gaymen NOT take the test for HTLV-III/LAV antibodies. The test does not diagnose AIDS or contagiousness; it merely indicates the presence of antibodies to the virus. The statement, released by the National Gay Task Force, emphasizes that the test should be used only in the context to screen blood donations in order to help safeguard the nation's blood supply, and as part of research programs that guarantee strict confidentiality. It also emphasizes the need for gaymen at risk to AIDS to continue to avoid donating blood.

☐ ARTS NOTICES by Robin Metcalfe (GANG)

Recent colour photographs by Halifax writer and photographer Robin Metcalfe will be on display through April 30 in the Photo Gallery of Wormwood's Dog & Monkey Cinema, 1588 Barrington Street, 3rd floor, Halifax.

A lesbian countess is just one of the characters in Berg's opera, LULU, to be broadcast on CBC Radio and CBC Stereo Saturday, April 13 at 3pm (N-B).

Reveille, femmes acadiennes! The great Edith Butler will perform at the Cohn in Halifax Monday, April 22 at 8pm. Tickets are \$15.50: students, \$14.

☐ GAY OSTOMATES (GANG)

Are you a gayman or lesbian who has had an ostomy and wants to talk to others in the same situation? A man in Halifax is interested in contacting other gay ostomates and has information on an organization for gay ostomates in California. Anyone interested can write to Jim, 1777 Bloomingdale Terrace, Halifax, B3H 4E6.

☐ SYMPOSIUM XII

The Maine Lesbian and Gaymen's Symposium XII will meet in Portland May 17-19, over the Victoria Day weekend. Sponsored by the Gay People's Alliance of the University of Maine/Portland-Gorham, events will be held on the Portland campus. As of April 7, details and schedule/registration information had not been received by NLN. In years past, housing was available in local homes; registration was on a sliding scale, \$5-15, depending upon your income. You may register at the door. The culmination of this year's Symposium will be a performance by the Boston Gay Men's Chorus, Sunday, May 19, 3pm at the First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church on Congress Street. Concert ticket prices are not included in the Symposium fee. You may wish to write directly to Portland for details: Symposium XII, GPA, USM, 92 Bedford Street, Portland 04102.

☐ NORTHERN LAMBDA NORD - WHAT DOES THE NAME SIGNIFY?

When established in January, 1980, the organization which we know today as Northern Lambda Nord was called "Aroostook Lambda", since those people who started the group were from Aroostook County. But at the first meeting at the end of that month, half of those in attendance were from New Brunswick. "Aroostook" seemed too limited. According to the NLN Charter, "The official name of our association will be NORTHERN LAMBDA NORD. "Lambda" is a Greek letter, adopted as a symbol by the international gay movement. "Lambda" means "eternal love." Given the geographic position which our association serves, we have added the expression NORTHERN/NORD to "Lambda." This expression appears in our two languages in order to respect the identity of Francophone and Anglophone members."

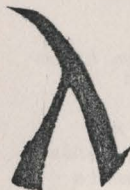
A history of the Lambda, from the New Hampshire Lambda Lesbians and reprinted in the Winter 1983 issue of *Sisters United*, is reprinted here:

Lambda, the eleventh character of the Greek alphabet, is the fore-runner of our letter L. Originally, the letter was a symbol for the scales carried by the figure of Justice. In time, the Lambda bore less of a visual resemblance to a scale, and its meaning became more abstract in that it came to represent the concept of balance or equilibrium.

The Ancient Greeks believed that balance was a reconciliation between two opposites, and as such was not a stable state. The Lambda finally emerged as it now appears; the small hook was added to the base of the letter to indicate that 1) some form of action is necessary to effect equilibrium, and 2) constant action is necessary to maintain that state of balance.

The Spartans adopted the Lambda as a symbol of unity.

Worn on their shields, it signified the special balance which they felt must exist between an individual and the State. They believed that the demands of society should never impinge on each person's right to be totally free and independent. They also believed that each individual must be bound to society by individual choice and desire. However, they recognized that only in a common bond could they hope to preserve their



existence as free and equal.

When Rome conquered Ancient Greece, they assimilated many cultural aspects. Among these was the Lambda. The Romans interpreted the shape of the Lambda to suggest a flame and therefore used Lambda to signify a torch. More recently, scientists, in seeking a symbol to represent the wavelength of light, drew on history and because of its connection with the torch, Lambda was chosen.

In the sixties, when gay liberation began to emerge as an organized movement after the Stonewall riot, the Lambda was selected as a gay symbol because of its historical significance. Previously symbolizing justice, balance and the reconciliation of opposites, unity and the relationship of woman/man and his/her society, freedom, equality and independence of the individual, a shining light...Because these meanings were imbued in the Lambda and these were the qualities representing the objectives of gay people and the gay movement, the Lambda was once again chosen as a symbol to convey a concept. Acceptance of the Lambda spread and as its popularity became recognizable, the Lambda's most recent historical association with light began to take on added meaning -- one of a social nature.

As a symbol of freedom for gay people, the Lambda represents the "light of knowledge shed into the darkness of ignorance" and promises hope of a new future, with dignity for gaymen and women everywhere. The Lambda is recognized as a unique international symbol representing gay rights; sexual liberation, justice and enlightenment, a balance in acceptance of differences by and within all of humanity.

Gay/Lesbian GUIDE Lesbienne/Gai

FREDERICTON: Fredericton Lesbians and Gays (FLAG), POB 1556, Sta. A., E3B 5G2 - FLAGline, 506/457-2156

ORONO: Wilde-Stein Club, Memorial Union, Univ. of Maine 04469 - meets at 7pm Sundays, South Bangor Lounge, Memorial Union

BANGOR: Bangor Area Gay-Lesbian-Straight Coalition (BAGLS), POB 1805, 04401, meets every other Monday, 7:30pm, 126 Union Street

INTERWEAVE: POB 8008, Bangor 04401. Holds pot-luck suppers at the Unitarian Church, 126 Union Street, on the first & third Saturdays, 6pm

QUÉBEC: Centre homophile d'aide et de libération (CHAL), 175, Prince-Edouard, G1K 2M2, 418/523-4997

Groupe gai de l'Université Laval (GGUL) et Groupe des femmes gaies de l'Université Laval (GFGUL), CP 2500, Pavillon Lemieux, Cité Universitaire, Ste-Foy G1K 7P4

SAINT JOHN: Lesbian and Gay Organization (LAGO-SJ), POB 6494, Sta. A., E2L 4R9

MONCTON: Gais et Lesbiennes de Moncton (GLM), CP 7102, Riverview E1B 1V0

PORTLAND: Gay People's Alliance, Univ. of Southern Maine, 92 Bedford Street, 04102, 207/780-4085

HALIFAX: Gay Alliance for Equality (GAE), Box 3611, So. Postal Sta., B3J 3K6, 902/429-6969

NEWFOUNDLAND: Gay Association in Newfoundland (GAIN), Box 1364, Sta. C., St. John's A1C 5N5

WEBWORK: women's correspondence club, New England & Maritimes, Box 131-N, Calais, Maine 04619

ARCHIVES FOR THE PROTECTION OF GAY HISTORY AND LITERATURE: Box 6368, Sta. A, Saint John E2L 4R8

OUR PAPER: A Voice for Lesbians and Gaymen in Maine - monthly newspaper, \$12 for one year, POB 10744, Portland 04104

MAINE LESBIAN/GAY POLITICAL ALLIANCE: POB 108, Yarmouth 04096

NORTHERN MAINE & NEW BRUNSWICK: Northern Lambda Nord, CP/POB 990, Caribou, Maine 04736-0990 USA. Gay-Lesbian Phoneline/Télégai - 207/ 896-5888, Wed/mer, 7-9pm (Eastern time/Heure de l'est). COMMUNIQUE is published ten times yearly by, for, and about the Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual community of northern Maine and northwestern New Brunswick. Subscriptions: \$10 per year. NLN membership: \$13 per year, which includes COMMUNIQUE. Low-income people may make arrangements to pay in installments. NLN accepts Canadian and U.S. funds at par. Advertising rates available upon request. We welcome your comments and contributions (deadline: the first of each month).