

Northern Lambda Nord Communiqué

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John W. (Jack) Vanek died in Santa Cruz, California Sunday, June 16, 1985 at age 47. Jack's death resulted from the effects of AIDS. He is survived by his mother and his partner of 16 years, Walter Lichtenstein. Jack resided in Fort Kent since 1974 and was one of the original organizers of Northern Lambda Nord. His enthusiasm for the group will always be remembered. Those who wish may make donations to The Shanti Project, a San Francisco-based counseling group that deals with the needs of dying AIDS patients. (890 Hayes Street, S.F. 94117)

On Father's Day 1985 Jack died of the effects of AIDS. He passed through the typical stages faced by the terminally ill: periods of anger, of denial, of confusion, and of constant sorrow.

I shared these intense times with my partner, Jack, and I learned some important lessons about life and death and love. The three weeks I spent with him in Natividad Hospital helped him regain lucidity, and the quality of life that we enjoyed together gave us clear insights into each other, insights that we had never been able to express during our sixteen-year relationship.

For example, I knew that Jack had no kind words to say about organized religion and that he felt death was a final absolute. What I had not realized was his concept of the Angel of Death. For Jack, this persona was a woman on horseback who would gallop down the mountains onto the plains, and pick up her victim, who she would carry off to "wherever she lives". It was not a frightening vision, but rather a view of the permanency of death. "There is no saying 'no' and no returning," Jack said.

His sadness was caused by knowing he would never leave the hospital, eat in a suchi restaurant, swim with our dogs, or visit a bathhouse. He enjoyed promiscuity and never expressed regrets. But a major, emotional change occurred while in hospital. For the first time, he felt a strong need for physical contact. Beyond holding hands, beyond a gentle massage, he asked me, night after night, to sleep next to him. The logistics of the request called for carefully moving him, checking the oxygen tubes, and gingerly, lying down. With this late-night intimacy came an intimacy of shared emotions. These were the times when he knew where he was and who he was. With wild flowers and favorite music, we created a very special environment that enriched our togetherness.

So, for a precious, brief moment in our lives, we experienced what our friend, Jonathan, used to sing about:

*You're out of the woods/ You're out of the dark/ You're out of the night
Step into the sun/ Step into the light*

/s/ Walter

AIDS-LINE ESTABLISHED IN MAINE

The Portland-based Gay Health Action Committee has begun operation of an AIDS-Line, a volunteer-staffed information and referral service of benefit to the gay-lesbian community and the population at large. The AIDS-Line is intended to be both a clearing house for information about AIDS, safe sex techniques, the HTLV-III test, etcetera, as well as a source of comfort, reassurance, and support for all of us dealing with the presence of AIDS in

our lives. AIDS-Line volunteers received initial training from the AIDS Action Committee of Boston. The AIDS-Line number is 207/775-1267. Details about their hours of operation will be published in the September issue of *Our Paper* and in the October issue of *Communiqué*.

AIDS - THE STATISTICS

As of August 8, 1985, the Centre for Disease Control in Ottawa reported 275 AIDS cases in Canada. The figure for the U.S. is near 11,900. There have been no reported cases in New Brunswick; Maine has reported 13 cases of AIDS, 4 of whom have died.

MILITARY MAY SCREEN FOR HTLV-III (Bay Windows, Boston)

The U.S. Department of Defense is considering a blanket screening of all military personnel and potential recruits for the HTLV-III antibody in their blood. The Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund and the National Gay Task Force responded by warning the government that they "intend to use all means at (their) disposal to assure" that the blood test is not misused. A Task Force representative said, "This is exactly the kind of misuse of the test that we feared at the time of licensing. If the Defense Department is successful in implementing this program, an important and dangerous precedent will have been set in the public sector that may become the basis for further abuses of individual rights in the private sector." The test for the AIDS antibody, HTLV-III, is used by blood banks to screen blood donations. Because of false "positive" indicators of the test, it is not recommended that people have their blood tested for exposure to the AIDS virus.

HALIFAX-BASED AIDS GROUP GROWS (Robin Metcalfe, GANG - Gay Atlantic News Group)

Forty people, including health professionals, clergy, and representatives of the Red Cross, attended the first public meeting of the Metro Area Committee on AIDS, or MacAIDS. Organizers included gaymen, health and human service professionals, and relatives of people with AIDS. The new organization replaces the earlier Gay Health Association, formed in September 1984. Unlike its predecessor, MacAIDS encompasses all those affected by AIDS, either personally or professionally, gay or straight. MacAIDS, POB 1013, Halifax B3J 2X1

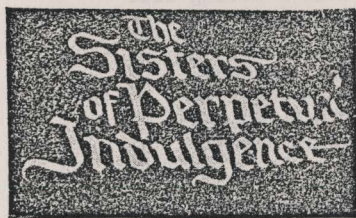
NEW HEALTH PAMPHLET AVAILABLE

The Toronto Order of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence have updated and reprinted their highly acclaimed brochure, *Cum Clean*. The pamphlet gives a wealth of information on sexually transmittable diseases in clear, everyday language. The campy, humorous approach to "dry medical" material has proven successful in motivating people to continue reading and thus be educated. Copies of *Cum Clean* are available to Lambda members in the lending library, or you may write to the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, Drawer O.P.I., care of *The Body Politic*, Box 7289, Station A, Toronto M5W 1X9.

Donations to help defray postage costs are greatly appreciated. "We are a small and impoverished order". (Make cheques payable to Harold B. Desmarais and Bryan Gryphon in trust.) They thank you.

OPENING SPACES by Randy, NLN "Foreign Correspondent"

For the past several months, Fredericton's gay community was abuzz with rumours about the impending arrival of a gay bar -- and last week (July 19), it finally happened! DANCE TRAX (59-61 Westmorland Street, diagonally across from the Fredericton City Police!) opened its doors to an eager, if somewhat apprehensive local clientele. Co-owners Bill, Clark, and Stephen



conceived the idea on a return trip from Quebec City. "Why should we drive for six hours for entertainment," concedes Clark, "when we can do that right here."

Sharing the building with an electronics store, Dance Trax boasts a quiet lower level lounge where alcohol and "coffee" are in abundant supply. For the more energetic, the upper deck swings to contemporary sounds of pop and rock music. The decor (in white and red) is "straight" (small s), clean, and simple. A huge bar and an equally large dance area provide ample elbow room to its nocturnal patrons.

The cover charge is \$2, and membership applications (\$20 annually) are available at the door or by writing to Dance Trax, POB 3062, Station B, E3B 5G8.

Congratulations to Dance Trax and to the three wise men who saw a "space" and "opened" it up!

INTO THE BIG CHILL by Ben

Now that I've lived in the Bangor/Orono area for almost a year, I thought perhaps a report might be of interest, giving my impressions of the lesbian-gay community there so that Lambda members can see what they are missing - or not. And I submit this report with the following caveat: these are just my own observations and experiences. I hope others have other things to report because I'm afraid that my comparison finds Northern Lambda Nord smelling as sweet as a big pink rose in contrast to the Bangor/Orono area (henceforward referred to as "the B/O area".)

I'm not exactly sure what the problem or problems in the B/O area may be. (I'm willing to accept some of the fault as mine, but when I consider the friends and acquaintances I had made and the loving way I had been accepted into Lambda by the end of one year and compare that to my experience in the B/O area after one year, I am certainly not going to accept very much of the responsibility.) Perhaps because more lesbians and gaymen in the area are able to get away to Portland, Lewiston-Auburn, and probably even Boston, there isn't the same need to work at a cohesive group like there is in the rural area up north. Perhaps from the larger urban areas some have picked up "attitude" which they have brought back with them to the B/O area, "attitude" that says that unless one belongs to your "group", is slim, muscular and beautiful, and under 30, plus several other "correct" criteria, then there is no need to "waste time" even talking to that person.

No matter what the underlying explanation(s) may be, I am rather disappointed to say that even though over the past year I have met and know by name a number of lesbians and gaymen, very few show much interest in even giving me the time of day, and they certainly don't go out of their way to get in touch or call up to say "hello" or say come over for dinner, etcetera, etcetera. If I needed any kind of help, any advice, just someone gay to talk to on a more than superficial level, I would be completely out of luck. (Two women at the University whom I talk with from time to time when I see them would probably be willing to listen, but they have their own lives and families and live some distance from the campus.) I can say with no hesitation that if I had been in the B/O area when I came out, I would still have a bad case of the closet and, as the cliché goes, would probably still be indistinguishable from the garment bags in the back of the closet. And it has been made very clear to me that I am significantly far on the wrong side of age 35.

And after a year in the B/O area, I still have found almost nowhere that one can go to meet gay people. I did attend the Wilde-Stein Club meetings on the campus, but they were a disaster almost until the end of the year. (I'll go into the details of that if anyone is interested.) Interweave and the Men's Educational Network (M.E.N.) meet fairly regularly and I have attended, but I've only developed a slightly better than nodding acquaintance with the few others who attend. I am aware that parties occur

here and there, but I've never received an invitation. I have not met anyone yet who has shown even the slightest interest in getting to know me as a person or a friend.

I had high hopes for the Interweave-sponsored dances at the Unitarian Church in Bangor. They are very well attended, but I have no idea where all those people come from since I never see them any other place. But they are all into the "groupie" thing and would seemingly rather die than dance or talk with a stranger. Typical is the case of a fellow who arrived by himself and sat by himself till I asked him to dance several times during the evening. No one else even talked to him, and he has not been back as far as I can tell. From time to time I have actually pulled a few words out of a stranger, but mostly only from those people that I know will talk. But even here, I sense they are not really interested in talking to me. I have even developed a little game for myself in which I try to determine when the person talking to me is going to wrench his neck out of socket as he jerks around to see if Prince Charming has just stepped through the door. At first I went to the dances with great expectations; I learned quickly to lower that to few expectations. Now I go with no expectations at all. I can get just about as much social exchange dancing by myself alone in my apartment.

Over the past year I have certainly come to understand Emersonian "Self Reliance". I've learned that when making any plans, either long or short term, not to expect to include anyone but myself. If anyone else happens to fit in and go along, fine, but I have learned not to depend upon that. In addition, I have learned it may not be wise to trust anyone under the age of thirty and even be suspicious of those older. I have learned to depend upon myself and my world of "things" as the most reliable source of entertainment and to be very, very leery of interpersonal relationships.

Perhaps the following says it all: since I've been in the B/O area, I have developed one new friendship and consolidated another. Both are straight men and both know I am gay. But they are interested in getting to know me as a person, as an individual, and they don't care one way or the other about my sexual orientation. I have had some wonderful long meaningful discussions with one of the men who is a senior here on the campus and we have gone to the coast to picnic and out to eat and just generally have a very good time together. He exemplifies all the social outlets I would have expected the gay community to provide. And I have a fine correspondence with the other fellow, a person I met three years ago and haven't seen since because he lives in Massachusetts.

By and large, though, I'm afraid that it's not a very encouraging picture - at least in my estimation. But it does mean that I intend to devote and channel my energies and efforts to Northern Lambda Nord, since it is the group that did accept me as I am, made me feel welcome, and has maintained friendship and interest in me since September 1983 when I first met any members of Lambda. I hope that all of you who have Lambda in your "backyard" realize what you have. Try to help it as much as you can to make sure it continues, because it certainly seems to be a better group than anything I've found in the B/O area.

PERSONALS

- * "Dear People: First, let me thank you for being. I am a middle-aged Gay man living (who knows why) in southern Aroostook County. To my utter surprise, I find the area has no Gay-oriented social gathering place for people of my gender-identification group to gather and socialize. Your group (may it long survive) is a tad bit north for my travel budget and my '66 Ford truck, although my significant other has participated in several of your functions in the past. Perhaps some of your members would be interested in the following proposal. I am a sometime gambler who enjoys playing cards with men and women in a not-for-high-stakes atmosphere. I recently returned from Bangor, where I took part in a weekly poker game (on Sunday night). I would enjoy having some of your members over one night a week (as-yet-undertermined), for the purpose of discovering what the odds are for filling an inside straight. Failing that, I am an

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excellent chess player and would love to find others who enjoy that pursuit. Perhaps we could form some sort of chess club (although I must confess I've cornered a few queens in my time, my board has gathered nothing but dust since my arrival in town). This is not a come-on for casual sex, nor is it a plea for some pigeons from a card sharp--if a poker game results I insist on low stakes. Rather, it is an enlightened attempt to meet other Gay people in a social setting where alcohol is not present and politics are not discussed. My partner and I are willing to have up to eight people at our table one night a week. Because I am an alcoholic who has seen the future from the bottom of a bottle, I ask that no booze be brought. Interested persons should write me and indicate the three best nights for them. I will pool the responses and inform all who respond by return mail (or through Ma Bell) of the night which seems to suit all." Jonathan D. Roberts, 101 Bangor Street, Houlton 04730

NEWS FROM SAINT JOHN

* According to an article in a recent issue of *The Lighthouse*, newsletter of LAGO-Saint John (the Lesbians and Gaymen's Organization of Saint John) a gay bar opened this past spring in this Fundy Bay city in New Brunswick. Called "Jay Jay's", it's open seven days a week. It is located in Hilyard Place on Main Street in the old Pier One location.

* While Jay Jay's has now opened, "Stella's Dances" have stopped. Stella and Carol have decided that they will no longer hold their monthly dances. These have been a long-time institution for the lesbian-gay community in Saint John.

* LAGO-SJ has established a phonenumber. Known as the Gayline, it is staffed Thursdays, 7-10pm (N-B). The answering machine handles the phone the balance of the time. Their number is 506/633-1256.

A LAMB IN NEED...

"Do you need a roommate? I am in need of living space to share in Woodstock, N.B. for college term (September to May or longer). Prefer to live with a non-smoker vegetarian gay male or in a gay-positive household. Contact A. Wallace, 17 Summit Street, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2Y 2Z7."

MR. GAY NEW BRUNSWICK

The Second Annual Mr. Gay New Brunswick Competition will be held in Saint John Saturday, September 14, 1985, at the Union Hall, Tower Street. The contest is open to all male residents of New Brunswick, at least 19 years of age at the time of the competition. Contact the Saint John Gayline for more details.

SEPTEMBER IN MAINE MEANS 'AUTUMNFEST'

Plans have been announced for the 1985 Autumnfest, sponsored by The Harbor Masters and the Gay People's Alliance of the University of Maine/Portland. Events this year will include:

* The First Autumnfest Classic, a run/walk/roll event, Saturday, September 21, 9:30am, with a \$5 fee (\$6 on the day of the event). The four-mile course starts and ends at the campus of Southern Maine Vocational Technical Institute in South Portland. All proceeds will benefit the AIDS-Line. (Event sponsored by GPA and the Portland Chapter of the National Organization for Women.)

* GPA and The Harbor Masters sponsor the Autumnfest Dinner, a benefit for the Maine Health Foundation and the Maine Lesbian-Gay Political Alliance. The dinner will be held at Verillo's Restaurant, Portland; tickets are \$17.50 each.

* The annual Autumnfest Flea Market (the 3rd), will be on the U of M/Portland campus Sunday, September 22. Tables for groups, individuals, or any other vendors will be available for just \$10.

For details on the Autumnfest activities, contact Laura Smith at the GPA (780-4085) or John Preston (774-3865).

On April 17, 1985, Section 15 of the Charter of Rights came into effect. This important section grants equal rights to all Canadians - including lesbians and gaymen. The federal government has not made any changes to laws or policies that currently discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. Instead, they have issued a "Discussion Paper" which raises questions about the extent to which current policies and practices deny full equality (for example, the policies of the Canadian Armed Forces or the provisions of the Criminal Code).

The special parliamentary Sub-Committee on Equality Rights has been holding hearings in centres across Canada to obtain the views of Canadians on equality issues. Hearings are scheduled for the Maritimes sometime in September.

In a letter from Svend Robinson, MP (Burnaby, BC), the New Democratic Party's representative on this committee, he urged our community to "Take this opportunity to voice long-standing concerns about needed changes to end discrimination. You can be sure that opponents of equality for gays and lesbians will be out in force. Make sure your voice is heard!"

"This is the first time in Canada's history that the gay and lesbian community has been given an opportunity to speak out to federal Members of Parliament on issues of concern to the community. Take this opportunity to send a clear message to the government - it's time for an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians in Canada. Tell MPs that the days in which men and women can be denied a job in the Canadian Armed Forces, the RCMP or other federal employment solely on the basis of sexual orientation are past."

As of this writing, this editor is not aware of the dates, times, and locations of the Equality Rights Sub-Committee's hearings in Atlantic Canada, nor whether the Fredericton, Saint John, or Halifax communities will be presenting briefs before the committee. However, according to the Gay Association in Newfoundland's newsletter, GAIN will present a brief when hearings are held in St. John's.



PROTECT YOURSELF! - Practice Safe and Sensible Sex!

SAFE

Massage
Hugging
Mutual masturbation
Social kissing (dry)
Body-to-body rubbing
(frottage)
Light S&M (no bruising
or bleeding)

POSSIBLY SAFE

French kissing (wet)
Anal sex without a condom
Sucking - stop before climax
Watersports - external only
RISK INCREASES WITH MULTIPLE
PARTNERS!!!

UNSAFE - Rimming, Fisting, Blood contact, Sharing sex toys, Semen or urine in the mouth, Anal sex without a condom. RISK INCREASES WITH MULTIPLE PARTNERS!!!

AIDS symptoms may include: Persistent fevers or night sweats - Unexplained weight loss - Enlarged, hardened, or painful lymph nodes - Recently appearing new growths on top of or beneath the skin or on the mucous membranes (inside mouth, anus, nasal passages, or underneath eyelids) - Dry cough not related to cold or flu - Persistent diarrhea - Thrush, a whitish, thick, persistent coating on tongue or in throat - Easy bruisability or unexplained bleeding. CHECK WITH THE LAMBDA LIBRARY FOR LITERATURE ON AIDS AND STAYING HEALTHY.

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Caribou, Maine 04736-0990 USA. Gay-Lesbian Phoneline/Télégai, 207/498-2088,
Wednesdays/mercredi, 7-9pm (Eastern time/heure de l'est)

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

ORONO: Wildo-Stein Club, Memorial Union, University of Maine 04469 - they
meet Sundays, 7pm, 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 (Unitarian Church)

BANGOR: INTERWEAVE, POB 8008, 04401 - Pot-luck suppers on the first & third
Saturdays, 6pm, 126 Union Street (Unitarian Church)

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

QUEBEC: 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, G1K7P4

SAINT JOHN: Lesbian and Gay Organization in Saint John (LAGO/SJ), POB 6496,
Station A, E2L 4R9 - Gayline, 506/633-1256

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

LEWISTON: Central Maine Gay/Lesbian Awareness Coalition, POB 7917, 04240

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

PORTLAND: Harbor Masters, Inc., leather-levi group, POB 4044, 04104

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

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

MONTREAL: Télégai, 514/933-2395

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,
Station A, Saint John, New Brunswick E2L 4R8

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

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

AIDS-Line, information and referral service, 207/775-1267

GAY HEALTH ACTION COMMITTEE, POB 10723, Portland 04104

MacAIDS, the Metro Area Committee on AIDS, POB 1013, Halifax, B3J 2X1

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