

CONSTITUTION
and
BY-LAWS
CIRCLE OF FRIENDS
Dallas, Texas

Circle of Friends: Constitution and By-Laws

Description

Constitution and by-laws of the Circle of Friends, a group organized "to establish and promote communication, understanding and harmony between the homophile community and the general public, to better the common welfare and secure the blessing of equality and justice to all" (para. 1). The document outlines the various governing articles of the organization.

[Letter from Phil Johnson to Circle of Friends board members]

Letter from Phil Johnson on Circle of Friends letterhead, written to board members. It includes a brief description and history of the organization and a proposed change to the organizational documents to change the title from "By-Laws" to "Bi-Laws."

CONSTITUTION
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PREAMBLE

We, the members of the "Circle of Friends", in order to provide a workable directive for this organization, to establish and promote communication, understanding and harmony between the homophile community and the general public, to better the common welfare and secure the blessing of equality and justice to all, hereby ordain and establish this Constitution and By-Laws for the "Circle of Friends".

NAME

The name of this organization shall be the "Circle of Friends" and shall henceforth be referred to in this document as the "Circle of Friends".

PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization shall be to:

- A. Foster improvement in the relations of the homophile community with the public, with the Church, and with civil authorities.
- B. Encourage all members and non-members to demonstrate by example that they are responsible and productive assets to their community.
- C. Provide social, educational, and entertainment activities.
- D. Educate and enlighten the membership in the following general categories:
 1. To attempt to meet spiritual and emotional needs of the individual member by counsel with other members of the Circle and such professional people as may be available.
 2. To attempt to meet his material needs by helping him find suitable employment, housing, and such other assistance as may be needed.
 3. To be aware of the rights which are common to all citizens and how to defend himself against harassment and unwarranted arrest.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Circle shall be in three categories:

He shall be granted a full hearing at a meeting of the Circle if he shall so request.

A two-thirds vote of the membership by secret ballot shall be required for expulsion.

Membership dues:

A. Membership dues for each resident and non-resident member shall be ten dollars per year, payable in advance during the month of January of each year.

B. There shall be no dues for honorary members.

C. Resident and non-resident members will automatically have his membership revoked if his dues are not paid by March 1st of each year, unless an extension is granted by the Executive Board.

D. Membership dues shall be one dollar per month, not to exceed ten dollars per year for new members joining during the year.

E. A person may apply for membership and be entered on the records under a pseudonym, but he must provide or arrange some practical means of mail communication.

F. No last names shall be reported in the minutes or used in any meeting by any person. Persons with the same first name shall be distinguished by the addition of an initial or initials.

G. No more than two sets of membership records shall be kept, and these shall be open only to the officers of the organization. Under no circumstances whatsoever shall the membership records or any information therein be disclosed to, or be available to anyone else.

MEETINGS

A. The Circle shall hold at least one regular membership meeting per month, time and place to be announced at the preceeding membership meeting.

B. All meetings shall operate under "Roberts Rules of Order".

C. The Circle shall hold an annual election of officers and a special report meeting in March of each year. This shall be for members only.

D. The Executive Board shall hold at least one regular Executive Board meeting each month, time and place to be announced at the preceeding membership meeting.

E. Any member may attend an Executive Board Meeting.



CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Post Office Box 35852

Dallas, Texas 75235

Dear Board Member,

I've enclosed some suggestions I wish you would consider at your January retreat.

You will note that this is printed on Circle of Friends stationary. The Circle of Friends was the first gay organization in Texas, founded by myself on the eve of the new year, 1965. Our simple purpose: a place for gay people to meet other gay people other than a gay bar. We (five gay men - four non-gay ministers) never dreamed that within a mere 15 years there would be many gay organizations in Texas or that anyone would dare challenge anti-gay laws. We've come a long way. Therefore I ask you, never get discouraged! Never give up. In ten years or even five, you will be amazed at what has been accomplished.

You are a good board. Thank God we have you.

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MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Circle shall be in three categories:

A. Resident Members:

1. Resident members are those persons who reside within a hundred mile radius of Dallas County.