

the empty closet

FREE



NEW YORK'S OLDEST GAY NEWSPAPER

ISSUE #94

MAY 1979

Vinnie Cups Awarded for 1979



Arnie, from the Bachelor Forum, presented the 4th Annual Vinnie Cup Award to the Rochester Gay Activist of the Year on April 29th. The Vinnie Cup Award was started 4 years ago in memory of a close friend of Arnie's and has been presented each year since then. The afternoon was celebrated with friends who enjoyed an Italian feast prepared by Vicki Russo and with food donated by Arnie. The Dorr Collection from Monroe Ave. Donated a beautiful floral centerpiece to complete the table. The proceeds from the event were donated by the Bachelor Forum to the Gay Alliance fo Genesee Valley Inc.

This year the award, which includes a silver trophy and public recognition of years of hard work, went to two individuals. Jim Ide and Mary Lou Wells who have been political co-workers and personal friends for many years accepted the award. Jim was co-president of GAGV for 1978 and has been a representative from the Rochester Gay Task Force in many political arenas. He has been the main liason

between the gay community and the Rochester police dept. and has helped make Rochester a safe place for gay businesses and gay people. He has devoted incredible time and energy and the gay community thanks him for his efforts. Mary Lour is presently on the board of directors of GAGV and is an integral part of the development committee and the Empty Closet Press. Her energy knows few limits and she has the ability to inspire others into action. She has unselfishly given of her own time and money to help keep the doors of GAGV open when there was no other way. She is politically aware and a real asset to the gay community.

Bill Copeland from the New York State Coalition of Gay Organizations, NYSCGO, spoke about the effective work GAGV has done throughout the years. He praised Rochester as the energy center for upstate NY gay movement. Rochester can be proud of the Gay Alliance and its many supporters.

Media Week of Dialogue Continues

by Sue Cowell

The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley participated in a nation-wide educational project entitled "The National Week of Dialogue with the Media about Gay and Lesbian Concerns." The Week of Dialogue project was created by the National Gay Task Force as a part of a larger project called "We Are Your Children." NGTF felt that an educational project that would encourage "dialogues" involving specific groups of gay and non-gay people would be a major effort toward increasing understanding and acceptance of gays and lesbians. In October of 1978, seventy groups throughout the country participated in a dialogue that focused on the issue of gay people and the family.

For a week in March the Gay Alliance focused on the first phase of Media Week, which was to sensitize lesbians and gay men to the images that the media uses and to develop skills to effectively use the media. The goal is to develop a more systematized approach to media monitoring. The Media Committee of GAGV has been busy coordinating this project in addition to its usual activities of sending community calendar announcements about GAGV activities, press releases, monitoring the media, and other activities.

A workshop on "Effective Use of the Media" was presented by Bill Klein, a local public service reporter from WVOR radio. The session was very informative and gave some "inside insights" into the workings of the media. It was also attended by several community groups outside of GAGV. A series of skill building workshops on typesetting and newspaper design were offered by the Rochester

Patriot staff for volunteers from the Empty Closet. In addition, several sessions were offered for discussion of images and issues with the media.

During April and May the second phase of Media "Week" is in progress. Experienced representatives from the GAGV will be visiting local media contacts to develop a better working relationship. GAGV hopes to sensitize local media and have them adopt a set of media standards which the Media Committee has developed. George Mohr, co-president of the GAGV, stated "Basically we have very good relationships with the media in Rochester. However, there are some areas in which we have had little contact, and through this project we hope to develop the relationship." Compared to nationwide media coverage, Mohr feels that the Rochester media has been very "responsive" and "responsible" in its reporting.

Despite support from hundreds of local lesbian and gay groups from all across the country, many gay people continue to be isolated, especially people living in rural areas. NGTF hopes to overcome this isolation through building a nationwide gay community. Stronger and more positive gay and lesbian images in national and local media are essential. Positive encouragement to gay people who are alone and afraid can help them to become more active in community affairs and find strength in being with or knowing about other gay people.

NGTF has developed nine major media concerns that will be addressed in the local area by GAGV representatives to the media. **Negative Stereotyping** continues to be a major concern. Often these images are presented because the media does not

know the facts about homosexuality. Educational campaigns must be directed to the general public and the media. **Favorable Gay News is often overlooked** and minimized. The media must be encouraged to report our victories as well as our defeats, for the media is often guilty of unbalanced reporting. **Lesbian Visibility** in the media has improved to some degree, but the media continues to seek out male spokespersons on gay issues. In Rochester, the Gay Alliance has a standard policy that applies to all media contacts and public speaking engagements. Whenever possible, representatives of the gay community will be "50-50" men and women. However, that didn't stop one local TV

station from using the graphic representation of two male symbols linked together to visually represent the "Gay Movement." This problem was addressed by the Media Committee.

Included in the nine points are policy issues such as **Non-Discrimination in Hiring, Stronger Editorial Support** for the passage of gay rights legislation, and the inclusion of gay leaders in the **Ascertainment Process**. The Federal Communications Commission requires that media management interview community leaders of various groups to determine media responsibility to those groups. At present, the option to interview gay representatives is up to the discretion of the management.

Lesbian Reality

by M.L. Wells and Staff

"Lesbian Reality," the fifth annual New York State Lesbian conference took over the small city of Binghamton on April 20th through the 22nd. Workshops which were held on the Binghamton SUNY campus and social gatherings at HERIZON, a lesbian/feminist private club, were attended by over 300 women.

Networking for upstate and rural women was the biggest major accomplishment of the weekend.

Some of the highlights from the many workshops we attended need to be shared with those women who could not attend this conference. Topics ranged from Les-

biens and Alcohol to Teenage lesbianism. Workshops on the whole ran without much difficulty.

The "Rural Networking" Workshop was especially interesting because of the many rural lesbians who were there to actually discuss their rural experience. Some were from small towns, and they talked of the oppressive atmosphere there, where the local shopkeeper is also the mailman who reads everyone's return addresses and where even Ms. magazine is unavailable. The workshop leader was from Elmira, where a new Lesbian Resource Center is flourishing, serving that city and the

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THE EMPTY CLOSET

Letters to the Editor & You

The CETA funded project "Equality" has been a good thing for the Gay Alliance over the past fourteen months. The "goods" and "bads" have enlightened both the public at large and the gay community.

The publicity at the beginning of the project and again this year caused an uproar of public opinion, both positive and negative, at City Council Meetings and in the media. Many people experienced a first look at Gays and as many others had to take a second look at us. Not only had we submitted a reasonable and sound proposal but the project was successful throughout the year, did not fail or flounder, and warranted a six-month extension.

The Alliance also benefited in some other aspects—many of us who worked closely with the project grew a great deal. The need for co-operation and perseverance was realized—that is to say, some of the "in-fighting" leveled off and things began to run a little smoother. Fatigue and burn-out also began to show in some of the "old timers," so new blood appeared and took an effective grasp of the situation.

The very nature of a CETA-funded project has also produced some devastating effects for the Alliance. The project fostered an increase in our scope of activities; it also put a very severe on our financial position. The need to pay expenses first in order to be reimbursed

reduced our operating fund to zilch—so we learned another thing: the need for cash flow!

The Alliance is in desperate need of monetary rejuvenation. Perhaps the foregoing will help people to understand how we have arrived at TODAY and how real is our need.

G.A.G.V. needs your contributions now and large or small, the gifts will be truly appreciated. Make a check (or give cash) out to: Treasurer, G.A.G.V., 713 Monroe Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14607, and send it out soon.

Thanks in advance for coming through when we need your support and faith in the endeavors of the G.A.G.V.

Howard C.

April 5, 1979.

Dear Editor:

S.A.G.E. (the Student Alliance for Gay Equality) of the State University College of Buffalo would like to make this donation to help assist in the reorganization of the Empty Closet. We look forward to your monthly publication, and are willing to assist in any way possible to continue its success.

Yours in Gay Pride,
Mark Boser
(Sage Representative)



Profile Personality of the Month

by M. L. Wells

Vicki Russo. Who is she? The most sparkling 52-year-old activist the gay community could have.

Vicki is the manager at the Bachelor Forum bar on East Main Street. She is your listener, your advisor, your well-wisher when you go into that bar.

She will sound you out if she sees your life being wasted. Vicki has taken people with no place to go home for Christmas Dinner to meet and make friends with her family of five.

Vicki has been tending bars for the last twenty years. There is only one catch. She will only bartend at a gay bar. She says that she does not want to put up with the hassle of straight men in straight bars. She started off at Martha's Dick's 43 on State Street. She then spent 5 years at the Rathskeller tending bar.

Well, why did she take up the gay cause? "It's just a good cause. I think that it is right."

One of Vicki's talents is fundraising. She says, "I should have been a salesperson or something. I'll just go up to one of the people at the Forum and say give me \$5 and they will hand it over. No questions asked."

Vicki says that \$1,400 came in that way between last September and Christmas. In December of 1978 she turned over two large checks to the Al Sigl Center and St. Joseph's Villa.

This year she wants to include another charity, St. Joseph's Hospitality House. Vicki got involved with a clothing and food drive for them for the month of April.

Vicki met Father Dan O'Shea, the head of the Hospitality House, through one of the patrons at the Forum.

On Good Friday, she brought money and a large ham to them as a result of her organizing the Bachelor Forum, Tara's, and the Avenue Pub. Vicki has found that on projects like these she can rely on the other bartenders—Jerry and Dominick—to be behind her in getting things done.

The back room at the Forum is now filled with clothing and canned food donations which Vicki will bring to the Hospitality House as a result of her month-long drive.

On April 29th Vicki will be cooking an Italian dinner for about 100 people. The occasion is the Annual Vinnie Cup Awards. Vicki is 100% behind this award that will go to the gay activist of the year. She doesn't mind cooking for scores of people for this special night; besides, some of her very understanding children will be helping her.

What else does Vicki have in store for us? She will be working with the Empty Closet to organize the bar owners advertisement of their two-for-one drink nights.

Then? She never quits. Vicki wants to have a fund-raising party for the Gay Alliance toward the end of May. Its purpose is to decorate a float so the gay community will be represented in the Memorial Day Parade in Rochester.

She wants gays to be visible members of this community. She knows how much we contribute to this community through our daily occupations. Now she wants everyone to know who we are.

This article could not be written without mentioning Arnie, part owner of the Bachelor Forum. Without his good natured attitude, Vicki may not have had this atmosphere and opportunity to do her work.

Thanks for the past, Vicki. We know that you have only just begun to touch our lives.

Gay Task Force Notes

by Elaine Smith

The Rochester Gay Task Force is moving ahead with new goals and new plans. We have a new president, who is bringing to the Task Force a renewed drive toward caring and action, within and for the community.

Many of our newly set goals are re-institutions of old ones. Some needs are continuous, such as encouraging gay persons to register to vote, and making our presence felt in local politics. We also hope to encourage more political letter writing. And we must strive to inform the community on the basics of the political issues so that we all can vote and write with conviction.

Plans for the spring and summer include a membership drive, both to bring in revenue through dues of \$5 per year and also to establish a roll, which will be kept in confidence by the Task Force, and which will provide a reference list of individuals who can be called upon for political or social action. We also are planning a polling of all prospective candidates for the fall as to their stand on gay issues. Planning for the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights is ongoing. If we find that the need is expressed as the October dates approach, we will arrange bus transportation. Let us hear your support and enthusiasm for the March.

The Task Force is fortunate to have Vern Hall as our new President. By his quick response to the needs at hand, he has already shown his conviction and dedication to the Task Force and to his position as a community leader. Vern brings to Rochester eyes that have been developed in other major U.S. cities, particularly Cleveland and Miami. From his gentle and friendly manner you might not suspect his many years of involvement in the gay movement around the country. But when he warms up on a topic you can see his drive, mixed with thoughtfulness and caring. Vern stresses our need to be organized and prepared for rapid action, such as picketing or making a large showing at a meeting or political session. Even if our need presently for such actions is not great, our readiness to act is important, to solidify our moral commit-

ment and to show our dedication to our important cause: our freedom, our right to be whole persons even from an early age, and our acceptance by all right thinking people. Vern says, "When we establish a membership roll, an important benefit will be a network of individuals that can be contacted at short notice to appear in whatever political duties may be needed, such as picket duty. As the Laws are not yet changed, and as they can be brought down to bear at the changes of political winds, this is felt to be necessary." Our involvement need not be accomplished with a sense of militancy, but with a sense of caring.

In less dramatic ways we must also exhibit our care. This can range from devoting a few days to political campaign work, to joining the Speakers' Bureau to strive for better public education, to large scale involvement in the routine work of the Task Force or other segment of the Gay Alliance. Use the Task Force as a resource to find out your area of interest. Don't let Vern talk to the walls, nor organize in a vacuum. And all members of the Task Force need your input, criticism, and even just your physical presence at the Monday night meetings.

At a recent meeting, James Ide, long time member of the active gay community and the Task Force, stressed the importance of local political action. Through his understanding of the ways of local politics and his first hand knowledge of what has gone on in that arena in past years, he could explain clearly how the local and state support that we now have is no accident, not merely a sign of the times, but a product of dedicated work and caring. Public opinion and political issues do not just shift and slide one way or another like some mindless amoeba. Opinions must be coaxed and cajoled, and pushed and sometimes gently threatened—in short there must be leaders, true community leaders, with a flair for diplomacy and the understanding needed to awaken people to new ideas.

The Task Force is hoping for a year of significant action and, so important, more and more exposure. We hope that the gay community can feel proud to have us working for them.

Anti-Gay Child Custody Bill Proposed

Assemblyman Mark Siegel, Democrat, 66th Assembly District, has introduced a bill to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in determining child custody and visitation rights. Although Washington, D.C. has passed such a bill, no similar bill has been introduced before on a state level. The lobbyist for the New York State Coalition of Gay Organizations, John Nehrich, worked closely with Assemblyman Siegel's staff in drafting this bill.

The bill (S. 8384; A. 9996) is presently in the Judiciary Committee of the Assembly. Your active support of this bill is urgently needed in order to move it out of committee, and into debate. The bill states: "No presumptions as to fitness or unfitness for custody or visitation rights shall arise based on the sexual orientation of either parent. The court shall determine solely what is for the best interest of the child, and what will best promote its welfare and happiness, and make award accordingly."

There is no evidence to show that homosexual parents raise homosexual children, nor are they in any way unfit. A number of authorities on child rearing have gone on record supporting an end to discrimination in this area, as have the American Civil Liberties Union and the Houston Women's Conference.

How important is this bill? How many gay parents can there be, anyway?

Studies estimate that from 1/5 to 1/3 of the lesbian community are natural or adoptive mothers, or a total of 180,000 lesbian mothers in New York State. A similarly large number of gay men are fathers.

Why is such a law needed? Aren't the courts a lot more liberal with child custody issues these days?

Lesbian and gay fathers are still the targets of blatant and cruel discrimination,

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COLLECTIVE THINKING

Editorial

In Rochester, the gay community has often recognized the contributions of gay activists for the movement. This recognition has manifested itself in the annual Vinnie Cup Award. However, the gay community has neglected to recognize the efforts and support of those individuals who themselves may not be gay, but have stepped forward to lend a hand and build roads between the gay community and the public at large.

One of these persons is Vicki Russo. Vicki's demonstration of support and willingness to listen been the turning point in the lives of many people who have had no place to turn. Vicki's outspoken and supportive statement at the City Council

hearings regarding CETA funding for the Gay Alliance was one more step in her personal struggle to see that "equality and justice for all" includes gay people.

Vicki was interviewed by M.L. Wells for this month's Personality Profile. This new addition to the **Empty Closet** will recognize those individuals who have made the gay movement a part of their lives because of a deep concern for their fellow human beings. If you know of anyone who has donated their time and committed themselves to helping others, please contact the **Empty Closet** so that the gay community can recognize the efforts put forth by people on an individual basis. It's time that we recognize both gay and non-gay people who give of themselves to help the gay community.

Shortchange

The Speaker's Bureau has sent representatives to 15 colleges and universities since January, 1979, to speak on gay and lesbian issues. If you're interested in becoming a speaker or in having a Gay Alliance speaker visit your organization, Call 244-8640.

WATCH FOR THE GAY ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP DRIVE.

The Gay Alliance office is open 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM everyday for visitors, volunteers, & people interested in using our lending library. We are located at 713 Monroe Avenue in the Genesee Coop.

WATCH FOR THE NEW GAY BROTHERHOOD SERIES "Everything You Ever Wanted About..." On May 23rd we'll discuss V.D. Also, regular meetings are at 8:00 PM on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month.

The Rochester Gay Task Force meets every Monday at 7:30 PM and is looking for new members to work on a candidate survey.

Keep **October 14** open for the National March on Washington, D.C. to show support for Lesbian and Gay Rights legislation.

Sign up now for **Assertiveness Training Workshop** in May. \$20 for 6 weeks of training. Call 244-8640 for information.

The GAGV is looking for someone who is willing to donate creative energy to assist us in raising money. Call 244-9030 or 244-8640 and leave your name and phone number. Cash reimbursement is possible.

BULLETIN BOARD

Note: All meetings are at 713 Monroe Avenue unless otherwise specified.

May 18-20: National Gay Health Conference in New York City. Call 244-8640 for more information.

May 18-20: Peer Counseling Social—a celebration and presentation of certification for trained counselors, 8:00 PM; everyone is invited!

May 17-21: Assertiveness Training by experienced facilitators. Pre-register before May 12. Call 244-8640 or 244-9030.

Lesbian Resource Center

May 16: Discussion with Maxine Sobel from **New Women's Times** at 8:00 PM, FREE.

June 6: "Handicapped Gays" Discussion facilitated by a physically disabled lesbian. All women are invited to attend. 8:00 PM, FREE.

Rochester Gay Task Force

May 14 and 21: Topic: Rally for Rights and Lesbian/Gay Pride Celebration on June 16 in Syracuse, 7:30 PM.

May 28: Open discussion at 7:30 PM.

Gay Brotherhood of Rochester

May 23: Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About V.D., 8:00 PM.

Dignity/Integrity

5:00 PM, every Sunday: Mass at Saint Luke's Church. Worship with us!

"MARCH ON WASHINGTON OCT. 14" T-shirts are available from the Gay Alliance for \$6.00. Small, medium, large in beige or white. Write 713 Monroe Ave, Rochester, NY 14607 with pre-paid order. Call 244-8640 for information.

PRIDE IS SENDING A DELEGATE TO HOUSTON to plan the March on Washington, D.C. for lesbian and gay rights. October 14, 1979.

May 21 at 7:30 PM-R.G.T.F.

Inter-City Media Exchange—delegates from Upstate NY Region will plan the media approach to the March on Washington DC on October 14. Come Out and Get Involved!

PRIDE IS CELEBRATING Lesbian and Gay Pride Week in Syracuse on June 16. Call 244-8640 for information.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Rochester Men's Conference

The first Rochester Men's Conference will be held on Saturday, May 19 9 AM-5 PM at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, East Ave. at Vick Park B.

Workshops on parenting, youth problems, sexuality, and sexism/patriarchy are already planned, but workshops facilitators are still being welcomed. Interested men should contact Ron at 473-8422.

For men who just want to attend the conference, pre-registration is strongly encouraged. There is a pre-registration fee, but it will be on a sliding scale and no one will be turned away for lack of money.

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It costs \$300 each month to keep the doors of the Gay Alliance open. Last year we handled 1500 counseling calls, loaned over 300 volumes from our library, organized the Rally for Rights for over a thousand people and provided social and political outlets for hundreds of others. And that's not all.

You've given to everyone else's cause NOW IT'S TIME TO GIVE TO YOUR OWN We must all support the struggle of Gay men and Lesbians for our rights. Please send your donation to:

GAGV
713 Monroe Avenue
Rochester, N.Y. 14607

If you want to volunteer time instead, call 244-8640 or 244-9030.

LESBIAN LINES

Let's face it! If you are reading the **Empty Closet** newspaper, and if you have actually let your eyes go past a sign that says **LESBIAN LINES**, then I know who you are and I know who I'm talking to and I know what I want to say.

Anyone, particularly female, who has made it past the lies, the fears, the dangers and the finances, to make it on her own; and has enough moxie left to care about herself and her sisters that she would have the **Empty Closet** newspaper in her hands and be reading under **LESBIAN LINES**; is a person who would understand that there are millions of women, children, and gay men trapped in a system that is punitive to females or "the weaker sex."

Pervasive in the philosophy of 'stronger' having a right to the 'weaker' is a need to constantly affirm that raping, pillaging and burning are the purview and privilege of men. To sustain this belief there is a demand for a constant diet in every form, fashion and medium, of men beating men—in armies, in sports, in movies, children's toys, in books, magazines, advertisements, everywhere! When the

clothes are off, obscenity becomes pornography and the most accepted portrayal is the domination of women.

The Rochester Women Against Violence Against Women have called a "Take Back The Night" March and Rally for May 11, 1979. The Rally is at the YWCA, 175 N. Clinton Avenue, at 8 PM. There will be music by the Rochester Womyn's Community Chorus and Leah Warnick, speakers, and feminist theater.

The March at 9 PM will leave from the YWCA and stop to present the demands at appropriate locations, and conclude at Washington Square Park.

RWAVAW has further requested that flares, flashlights, signs, banners, whistles, pots, pans, and other paraphernalia proper to a Marching Band be brought by anyone who wishes to be part of the demonstration. Free childcare will be provided. Transportation will be available for those unable to walk. Men interested in demonstrating support or helping with child care, call Ron at 473-8422. For other information, call 288-1779 or 461-4592.

The advertisement for the event points out that: Rochester's streets are not safe for women. Our homes and workplaces are not safe either. On May 11, Rochester women will march together to demonstrate that we refuse to be victims any longer. **WE WILL FIGHT BACK!** Violence against women is a community problem. We insist that women's voices be heard and our concerns taken seriously. The list of demands to be presented at "appropriate" locations are:

- An end to sexist schooling
- self-defense training for all women and girls, provided by the public school system.
- an end to violent propaganda against women on television and radio.
- the elimination of rapist culture, especially pornography.
- all media stop pimping for pornographers.
- the decriminalization of prostitution.
- rape of rape victims by the legal system be stopped.
- rape by husbands of their wives be recognized as a crime.

- free abortion on demand and the end of all sterilization abuse.
- funding for Rape Crisis Center by the Community Chest be reinstated.
- an end to all exploitation and profiteering from women's bodies.

God has so decreed, at this time, in the United States, to have 51% of the population be female. When you add to that figure, the children, you can see how dramatically the percentage rises. When you add to that the "nice guys" you can see that there is no longer any reason for the streets to belong to the "bad guys." They should, democratically, be absolutely safe for everybody.

The Take Back The Night March and Rally is a demonstration of the logic and necessity for the will of the majority to prevail. That will demand, first of all, an end to the constant barrage of pornographic propaganda that has women as victims. **You know** how you fear the streets at night, and yet you have dared to use them. Use them together this night!

Conference

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surrounding countryside. Most fascinating of all to me were the farmers. These lesbian farm households are groups of 2 to 4 lesbians, some also including children. They say that many of their neighbors are very curious, but for the most part not condemning, being more concerned with their farming ability and their financial stability within the rural community. Some of these rural lesbians belong to loose-knit networks of up to 30 persons, though many miles often separate the members. They all talked of the need to devote more energy to drawing the networks closer, and including more people. One way rural lesbians find each other is through centers such as Elmira's L.R.C. and through the magazine **The Lesbian Connection** which publishes lists of "contact dikes" for the entire country.

The workshop on "Teenage lesbianism" was really a great and sorrowful complaint against the condition of teenage lesbians. There seems to be so little that can be done for these young women in the loneliness and fear of adolescent homosexuality. The laws are still threatening enough to prevent lesbian teachers from counseling young lesbian students. That is still almost unthinkable unless the teacher is a very courageous and almost reckless person. L.R.C. groups can also come under fire and must step very carefully on these matters. Lesbians have not yet, in any significant numbers, stepped forward and extended a hand to our younger sisters. All too few of us have even spent much time thinking about the situation, wanting to forget those years made unhappy by lack of information, misinformation and the fear of being truly different from the social norm. The

suggestions put forward were to offer information and counsel where possible, to stuff lockers clandestinely with information and to conceal positive pamphlets on homosexuality inside encyclopedias and standard books that "explain" homosexuality, so that those seeking information where they can will find something better.

"Lesbians and the Mental Health System" stressed that we must utilize all sources available to us—family friends, those with expertise, those who are experts by experience, professional and non-professional alike. Warnings given were to avoid attributing one's problems to one's lesbianism, and to avoid looking for "cures" or trying to lay one's problems on someone else's lap. The patient must always be critical of the analyst and decide for herself whether she is being helped or not.

The Lesbian Mothers Workshop was attended by about 25 women with various interests and concerns. Discussions about what pressures were felt by the mothers and their teenage children surfaced first. Some of the mothers then expressed the fear that they were all alone or thought that they were until they came to this workshop.

There was a question about coming out to children (and especially to male children) that generated several opinions. Some women felt that they would never come out to their kids until they were asked a specific question about their lesbian lifestyle. When the facilitator asked each of the women to introduce themselves, it was found that their children ranged in age from 4 to 24. One woman who had lost the custody of her children stated "I haven't lost my children. They are just living at a different point."

The children of lesbian mothers, it was decided, sometimes have to share the "burden of secrecy." Another participant

felt that it was a shame that lesbians did not have more children so that there would be more role models for future lesbians with children to follow.

Some future solutions to alleviate the lesbian mothers' problems were to have more community activities which included their whole families, and to help the mothers get out of the house more by

sharing babysitting among the lesbian community as a whole. Jars could be set up in bars as a source of babysitting money. The last thing that was noted was that the Child Custody Bill was in the Senate Judiciary Committee in the New York State Legislature this year, and that everyone there should write letters urging its passage.

Media

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Because of the work of the GAGV Media Committee, 1979 was the first time our needs were ascertained by a person-to-person interview with all the local Rochester radio managers. We are now also recognized by each individual contact that we have.

Local news coverage of the Media Week included a news feature on WCMF, an article in the **D & C**, and various news spots on local radio. Matt Rinaldi devoted a Rochester AM show to the Gay Alliance, in which George Mohr and Susan Cowell were his guests. Channel 13 also covered the Week of Dialogue by using a piece by Loren Dixon. Mohr feels, "This is the king

of positive reporting that the gay and lesbian community deserves to have in Rochester."

There are many opportunities to get involved and develop your skills. **The Empty Closet** needs writers, production assistants, and typesetters. The Media Committee needs media monitors and new members to learn how to write press releases, and coordinate projects. If you're interested in getting involved, please call 244-8640 or 244-9030 and leave your name. Someone will call you back and give you more information on how you can help the gay movement. If you don't have the time to donate, please consider sending a check instead, earmarked "Media Committee" to GAGV, 713 Monroe Avenue, Rochester, New York 14607.

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Price may be negotiated if willing to donate volunteer hours to GAGV.

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a Friend

ROUNDUP

Books in Review

DAVID AT OLIVET by
Wallace Hamilton
St. Martin's Press

by Vern Hall

If you are a history or theological buff as myself, you will enjoy this book immensely! I found that I could not put this one down. Had to read it at one setting. It tells the story of David, Saul, Jonathan, and Absalom with such insight and beauty that you cannot possibly doubt the homosexuality of King David. It tells of him as a human, but all the resource material is drawn from the Bible and Interpreter's Bible. Novelistic license is used, but where do you separate fact from fiction? Only in the conversations between the principles. It draws upon the actual customs of the times in which the people had concubines and male lovers. Saul does not lose a bit of his majesty, I came from it feeling more kindly to him. Jonathan is not really enlarged as he could have undoubtedly been. There is a large gap in the early kingship of David, but since this is more or less a straight period of his life, it was not necessary to the story. I would have liked to have seen a treatment of it nevertheless. The sexual parts are not explicit and treated with dignity and beauty, in keeping with that of the principles. A novel with force and interest. Definitely looking forward to more novels in this genre. Very highly recommended reading.

A QUEER KIND OF DEATH by
George Baxt
St. Martin's Press

by Vern Hall

A young model found dead in his bathtub by electrocution by his radio which has fallen(?) into the bathtub! Fast paced, with action that does not relent. Who has killed him? The detective, Pharoah Love is hot on the trail, and uses the talents of the ex-lover, Seth to help solve the problem. The cast of characters is not overly large and easy to keep a grip on. You are told early on who the killer is in his own words, but it is not believable. The interaction of

all characters to the main character is redundant, my god how many people can you know that well! The only fault that I could find was the fact that the detective called everyone a cat of some type over and over ad infinitum. The ending itself is a surprise, and if you like detective novels, gay ones, pick this up and read! You will enjoy. Sexual scenes are not explicit and certainly needn't be. Written with class. Recommended reading.

SPECIAL TEACHERS/SPECIAL BOYS by
Pete Fisher/Marc Rubin
St. Martin's Press

by Vern Hall

ST/SB is a story of a small school for juvenile delinquents in which one of the teachers is a gay activist who has made a TV appearance and the subsequent effects of such. The cast of characters is not especially large, but each is drawn with skill. These are all problem youths who have various troubles compounded by their environments. The special teachers in the title are those who have several boys assigned to them for special counseling for their needs. One of the teachers, the only black teacher, is also a Black Nationalist, his involvement in which further compounds the plot. The story deals with each boy's special problems and one in particular, Rocky, is the one in which we would all be able to identify with as he struggles to accept his homosexuality and the love he has for a fellow student and the initial rejection by that love to his coming out. The boys in the story react, as a whole, quite supportively to the main character's coming out, while the teachers themselves are the ones in a quandary. The action is fast, doesn't relent, and at times leaves you breathless with expectations which are not let down. The ending is one in which most gay novels do not indulge. The sex scenes are not explicit, but are done in a manner which would not offend anyone. The entire book is written in a manner that you would not be ashamed to have mother read for the manner in which the struggle is shown. Recommended reading.

Groups Endorse March on D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Universal Fellowship of the Metropolitan Community 'churches, Integrity, Inc. and the Gay Rights National Lobby, Inc. today jointly issued the following statement regarding the proposed March on Washington: "A national March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights is being planned for October 14, 1979, in Washington, D.C. After careful consideration we have decided that this particular action at this point in time is not a priority for us. Further, it does not seem to us to have sufficient focus to merit the diversion of resources that this effort would entail. Such a march would require major expenditures

of time and resources which our organizations feel are more urgently needed elsewhere in the Lesbian and Gay Communities, both locally and nationally.

We recognize different strategies and priorities exist within every movement. Therefore, although our organizations will not take an active role in organizing the march, we will not oppose or interfere in this effort."

Those wishing further information concerning this decision should contact either Ben Leech of GRNL at (202) 462-4255, Adam DeBaugh of UFMCCat (202) 543-2260, or Don Mitchell of Integrity at (215) 732-8498.

Poetry

THE UNSPOKEN WORD

Hands in hair,
parting like wheat
suddenly blown and separated
by one singular rush of wind—
I bowed low to your earth,
your firm, fluctuating terrain,
tracing the gullies, mountains, and ravines
with lips parched and open,
searching out the answer to the riddle
of an ancient tale,
rising and falling to the pitch and volume
of this rich, guttural song,
and never showing the slight, hesitant
pause
before returning to the sky
for one last breath of unfiltered air;
And then taking in a warm summer's rain,
filling the gulf with a smooth, steady light,
and stretching my limits,
my frail, reed-thin boundaries
to accommodate my desires
until I fall down flat on my knees
in the midst of a grinning, smiling storm
that mkes me ride the waves
like horses in a sea of grass,
anticipating the final cast-off,
the surge that will fling me back
upon the shore, spent and tired,
with fingers tracing circles in the sand.

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An Understanding

A Boy is oh so small, or so he starts. A young man may invite trouble, but this is often the way. And this young man grows. And this young man grows further, or so he should. He should at some time mature.

Sometimes they all can't hack it. They, more than offer, break down and cry. But many do not break down and cry, they just break down or worse.

We all have certain qualities. There is not a person to deny this. We cannot expect all to approve. But, on the other hand, none should hate.

The whole of man seems awful, it warrants hate and revenge. But keep yourself a spirit, and the slightest trace of hope.

Our preference often separates us. But the rest of life goes on. So keep an eye on your neighbor, and despite what you think, I'm sure he is just like you.

My Friend, I'd see you often,
Your face so worn, so blue.
But now you've found some freedom.
It was always there for you.

For Don A.—We Will Never Forget You.

Upstate Plans for D.C. March

On Oct. 14, 1979 there will be a National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. The purpose of the march is to show support for an end to all social, economic, judicial, and legislative oppression of lesbians and gay people.

Following the assassination of San Francisco supervisor, Harvey Milk, his will revealed that he wanted a march by lesbians and gay men if threats against his life were carried out. A Harvey Milk March was spontaneously created with a call for a National March on Washington.

In Philadelphia during February 1979, the first National Conference for a March on Washington was held. The outgrowth of the Philadelphia Conference was to organize on a regional and national level.

The Gay Alliance of Genesee Valley, Inc. sponsored a regional conference for upstate NY on April 28th, 1979. This

conference designated four delegates to represent upstate NY at the Second National Conference. The 2nd National Conference will be held in June in Houston, Texas. The four delegates are: Beth Foster, Susan Cowell, Vern Hall, and George Mohr.

The National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights is enthusiastically supported by the Gay Alliance, the Lesbian Resource Center, Gay Brotherhood and the Rochester Gay Task Force. Read the Empty Closet and come to RGTF meetings every Monday at 7:30 p.m. to keep informed of developing plans for Rochester's participation in the March on Washington. GAGV is now selling silk-screened t-shirts for the march for \$6.00. Call 244-8640 for further information. GAGV is located at 713 Monroe Ave. in the Genesee Co-op building.

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ROUNDUP

Poetry

VEILS OF ARDOR for t.p.

Through veils of smoke
two sullen, hollow eyes
peer across the room
at a rocker once occupied,
still giving motion to the air
and setting forth
gentle waves of currents
that move like silent snakes
across the floor,
giving quiet cause for fear.

In a low level hiss
they curl and entwine
two pairs of legs
and weave a pattern
long delayed.

© by Richard Natoli-Rombach

It's Long Over Due! Thank You Lou

Why am I thanking Lou, that little
lady who runs the Riverview?

I've seen that little lady come out in
the worst weather to open the bar for the
girls!

I've seen that little lady stick up for a
lot of us!

I've seen her concern when there's
some kind of trouble!

But most of all Lou show's she care's.
A lot of us don't have any place to go
during the week. The Riverview is like a
second home away from home. We can
watch T.V., play pool, play the juke box or
just chat with someone.

I believe in giving credit to some one
when it's due.

So Lou — thank you for all your
service — all year. We appreciate you! You
may be little in size, but very big in our
eyes!

Sally

Custody Battle Discrimination

continued from page 1

in a time of more liberal custody rights for others. More lesbian and gay fathers than ever before are expressing their desire to have the rights to custody or liberal visitation of their children. Until relatively recent years, many gay parents knew they had absolutely no chance of winning custody, so "coming out" automatically meant giving up your kids. Lesbian mothers were told that if they "love their child" they would never go to court to fight for custody. Now avowed lesbian mothers and gay fathers are beginning to fight for their children, but still have very little chance of winning: less than 5% in cases tried up until now have gone in their favor.

Many gay fathers have been denied the right to ever see their children. Most lesbian mothers have been denied custody and may have restricted visitation rights. Judges are now beginning to allow avowed lesbians to keep their children, but only under the stipulation that they do not live with their lovers in the presence of their children. In other words, the woman is forced to decide between being a mother and a human being. The possibility of the lesbian family as a viable alternative is also obliterated. Feminists have argued that the agony of a lesbian mother is an intentional punishment by a homophobic and woman-hating society. The lesbian mother must be made an example, in order to keep all women under patriarchal control. Lesbian families must be stamped out because they might just be successful in rearing strong, capable, and loving children.

Don't other laws protect the rights of lesbian and gay parents?

Yes, to the extent that a judge believes they are entitled to any rights at all, other laws can be cited, and have been in the few successful cases. Lesbian mothers should not be denied custody rights solely on the basis of their sexual orientation because this would be a violation of their constitutional right to privacy, and of the equal protection clause of the 14th amendment. However, the child custody bill presently before the legislature would make these rights explicit.

Why should we put our energy into the passage of this bill? If we repealed the consensual sodomy bill or worked to pass the Gay Rights Bill, we would no longer be defined as criminals, and gay parents would have an easier time in court as a result.

The principle is true, but does not deal with realities. We are not likely to pass either of these more far-reaching bills in the present legislature. This bill has a much better chance of passing sooner and may set the stage for broader changes. The strategy of chipping rather than blasting away a restrictive practices has historically been more successful. While this may not be as politically satisfying, it is clearly more realistic. Also, laws regarding domestic relations, as does this one, are entirely separate from the more general area, and must be seen in their own light.

What might be the effects of this bill?

In essence, this bill if passed will give the lesbian mother or gay father a fairer chance in court. Family court judges are extremely discretionary, and the bill cannot provide guarantees. However, "the only effective control against a decision based on prejudice and homophobia is a requirement that harm to the child can be

demonstrated before any factor, such as the mother's lesbianism, can be considered." This bill would require the case against a gay parent clearly demonstrate such a link, and not merely assume one, as has been the practice.

What can I do?

Write to your state assemblyperson or senator in your own handwriting if possible. Tell them why you support the bill. Cite specific instances of discrimination of which you are aware, and personal feelings about these cases. Facts are usually tragic enough without dramatics being required. If you are a parent, with children old enough to write, have them write about their experiences both positive and negative.

Write to members of the Judiciary Committee.

Call and make an appointment to see your legislator in person.

For more information, call the GAGV

I have custody problems right now. What shall I do?

Your tactics at the present time will be extremely conservative if you do not have a chance of keeping your children. Call the Gay Alliance peer counselors to ask to speak to a representative of the Lesbian Mothers Support Group. We have collected printed materials and can give you some advice based on our experience.

Levy Appointed

Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund proudly announces the appointment of its Executive Director, Ms. Barbara Levy, to the position of Assistant Attorney General for the State of New York in the Civil Rights Unit. Ms. Levy has been Lambda's Director since February, 1981. She was previously associated with the Women's Rights Project of the ACLU.

"As a feminist and civil libertarian, I am looking forward to the challenges presented by my new position," commented Ms. Levy. "It will give me the opportunity to explore, through litigation and the development of legislation, expanded avenues for achieving a just and equitable society."

The Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund seeks to eliminate discrimination against lesbians and gay men through education and litigation. A special committee has been formed to select a new Executive Director. Resumes may be submitted to Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, 22 East 40th Street, New York, NY 10016.

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Children of Gays Unite

Renee Epstein, a free-lance writer in New York City, is seeking interviews with gay parents (both lesbians and gay men) and their children from all parts of the country for a book she is writing on children of gays. Commissioned by a small independent publisher, View Press of Bennington, Vermont, Ms. Epstein's book will not be a scientific study but rather an impressionistic portrayal of the variety of relationships between gay parents and their children. The anonymity of participants will be fully protected if they so desire. The children to be interviewed must be aware that the parent is gay and old enough to talk clearly about it. Ms. Epstein is particularly interested in interviewing older children and adults (whether gay or non-gay themselves) who grew up knowing of a parent's homosexuality. The book will focus on the children, not the

parents, but the author, though not gay herself, is extremely sympathetic and aware of gay and feminist issues, and her book should be a valuable resource for gay people who are or want to be parents in their struggle for public acceptance. The nucleus of the book is an article that Ms. Epstein was asked to write for the *New York Times*, only to have it rejected for being "too pro-gay." The article was published in Boston's *Real Paper* on March 11 and is being considered for publication elsewhere. The book is planned to appear sometime in 1980.

Ms. Epstein will be traveling around the country for interviews, but preliminary screening must take place by telephone. She has a toll-free (no charge to calling party) number for this purpose: 800-223-0810. Her mailing address is 325 West 75th Street, New York, NY 10023.

Gay Health Update

Interest in mounting world-wide in the 2ND NATIONAL GAY HEALTH CONFERENCE sponsored by the National Gay Health Coalition (NGHC) to be held on May 18-20 at Hunter College in New York City. NGHC is comprised of the lesbian, gay and bisexual caucuses of the major U.S. health-professional organizations.

Bernice Goodman, MSW and Henry Messer, MD, who have been openly gay and working in the gay health movement for over 20 years are scheduled as keynote speakers for Friday night, May 18. Everyone from Gay Youth to Senior Action in a Gay Environment (SAGE) are actively participating in the planning and imple-

mentation of the Conference and its many activities.

In addition to the Valentine's Day Benefit Party, recently held in New York City, various social/fund-raising events, e.g., concerts and raffles, are being organized.

In conjunction with sponsorship of the Conference the Coalition will be publishing the first edition of the *National Gay Health Directory* this spring. The Directory with an initial press run of 5,000 copies will be distributed free of charge to the conference registrants. Any copies left over from the Conference will be sold nationally at a nominal charge to help defray Coalition costs.

Free listings are being solicited from persons or agencies that provide health-related services to lesbians, gay men and bisexuals, and may be submitted up to the publishing date which will be sometime around the first part of May. In addition, display advertising, due March 31, may be purchased by the community at large. Further information, advertising information, or a brochure on the Conference may be obtained by writing the National Gay Health Coalition (NGHC) at 55 West 26th Street, No. 402, New York, NY 10010 or by calling 212-725-0114.



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THANKS to all who made my birthday one of the greatest ever!

Love ya,
Uncle Jim

The More News Page

Bill Introduced

WASHINGTON, DC—A 1979 Gay Rights bill has been introduced in Congress, says Endean, Gay Rights National Lobby Executive Director announced. "With two leading Congressmen such as Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Los Angeles) and Rep. Ted Weiss (D-New York) acting as chief sponsors, I believe that the effect will be to strengthen our support and increase our visibility more effectively than ever before," Endean said.

—from *Arizona Gay News*

Gay Label Feared

NEW YORK CITY (BAR)—Singer Michael Jackson ("Jackson Five") has rejected the role of the Gay dancer in the movie version of the Broadway show "Chorus Line" because "some people already think I'm gay—homo." The singer told *Jet* magazine that such a role would have more to do with "thinking I am that way." He added that this has already been a problem because of his voice—although "I'm not really that way at all. It is just gossip."

—from *Arizona Gay News*

Good/Gay Times

Gays got a good word in two recent issues in *Jet*, a national magazine aimed primarily at Black readers.

In an article titled, "It's Hard To Have a Good Time In Non-Gay Disco," says disco singer Sylvester. "Gay audiences are the most supportive we've ever had...Straight discoteers are tired; Gay discos are fabulous."

In a second article, *Jet* reported on a study that dispels myths about Gays, including "quickie sex" in public restrooms and child molestation.

—from *The Blade*

Lover Spouse

A U.S. immigration ruling denying "spouse status" in a visa application of an Australian Gay man married in a Colorado ceremony to a California Gay man is expected to be challenged in a Los Angeles Federal court shortly.

Australian Anthony Sullivan was married in Boulder, Colo., to Richard Adams in April, 1975. Adams entered a visa application for Sullivan under "spouse" status shortly afterwards.

In a November, 1975 ruling, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service said the applicant had "failed to establish that a bona fide marital relationship can exist between two faggots." Following a storm of protests, the INS withdrew that ruling and handed down a new ruling denying visa status the following week.

INS officials in Washington said that INS could not recognize the marriage since "Colorado law specifies marriages must be between men and women." Officials said that the INS had supported citizenship applications from Gay people in the past, and would continue to support them without regard to sexual orientation.

—from *The Blade*

Few Women

On the latest list of recommendations for federal judgeships are only eight women amid 100 men. The names will go to the Justice Department, which screens prospective judges before President Carter makes his nominations. Carter has so far nominated ten women, out of a total of 81, to the federal bench.

About two percent of the existing 525 federal judges are women. According to 1978 figures, about 9.4 percent of the nation's 479,000 lawyers are women.

—from *The New Women's Times*

Abzug on Ms.

(HER SAY)—Feminist leader and former New York congress member Bella Abzug has signed on as *Ms.* Magazine's first regular columnist.

Abzug says she plans to write about the response generated by the "Friday Afternoon Massacre"—her dismissal by Jimmy Carter as co-chair of the President's National Advisory Committee for Women, in the May issue.

—from *The New Women's Times*

Steps Back

CARSON CITY, NEVADA—The Nevada state senate has voted 20 to 0 to make homosexual relations punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for not less than one year, reports the *Bay Area Reporter*.

If the legislation is passed into law, it will run counter to a trend set by most states to legalize homosexual relations between consenting adults. During the last nine years, 21 states have removed criminal penalties.

—from *The Blade*

Gay Rabbi in S.F.

The members of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav in San Francisco appointed Allen B. Bennett March 2 to serve as their rabbi.

Bennett, who is the first rabbi to publicly acknowledge that he is gay, was ordained at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati (Ohio). Before coming to San Francisco, Bennett served as rabbi in Rochester (Minnesota) and as Jewish chaplain to patients in local hospitals and clinics.

In addition to his new duties at Sha'ar Zahav, Bennett is pursuing a doctoral degree at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley.

—from *The Advocate*

Only in Dallas

DALLAS—A Dallas television station has cancelled a weekly religious television program following a stream of anti-Gay comments by its host, evangelist James Robison.

The action came after Robison attacked the Gay rights movement as "a perversion of the highest order" and said that murders of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk were evidence of God's judgement against homosexuality. The television preacher also quoted police as saying that Gay men recruit and murder small children.

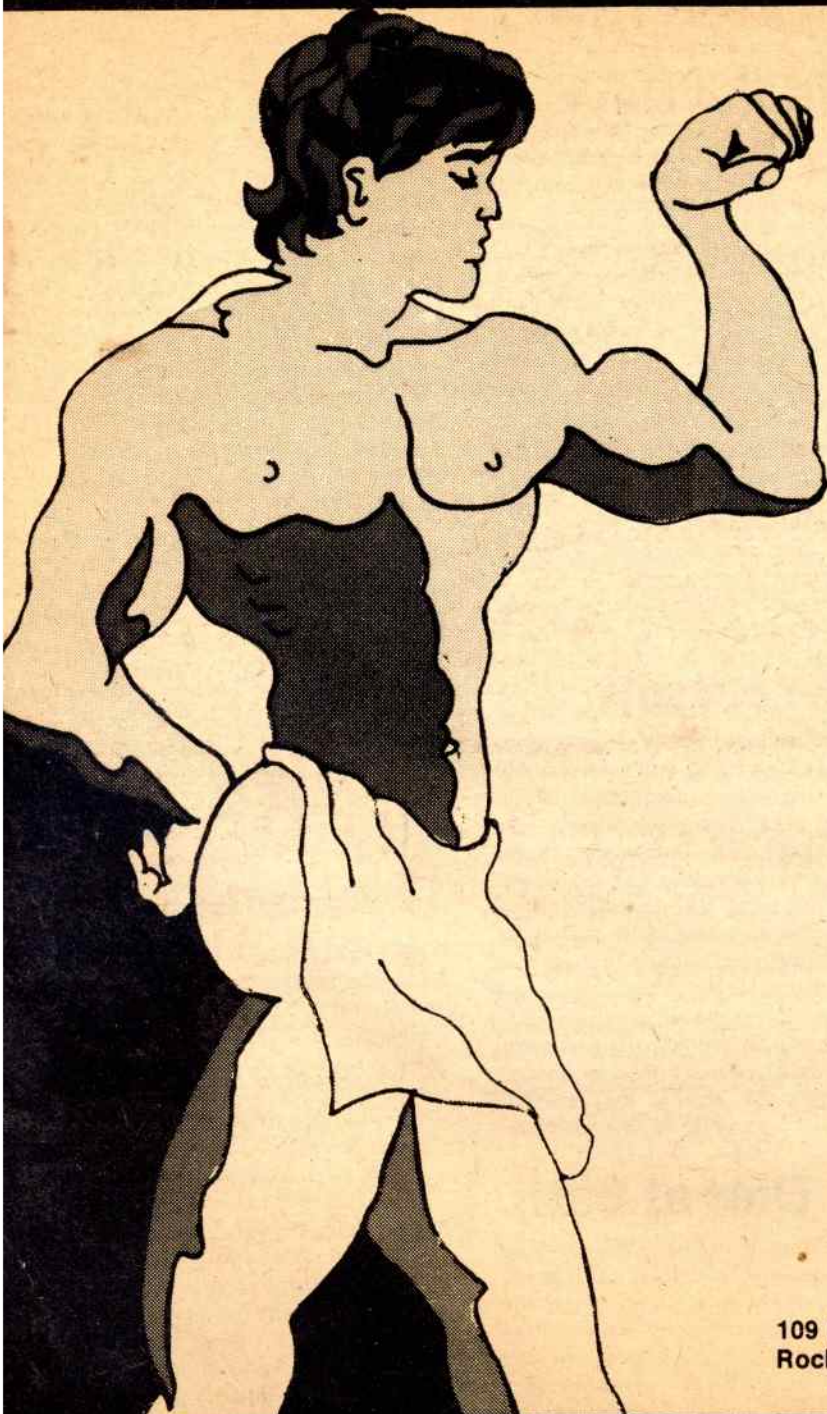
While banned in Dallas, Robison's program continues to be aired by several dozen other television stations around the nation.

—from *The Blade*

Vets Get Chance

WASHINGTON, DC—Because of an official, though largely unpublicized, policy change, gay veterans issued less than honorable discharges solely on the grounds of their homosexuality may in most cases have them upgraded to "honorable" and begin receiving standard veteran's benefits. For this purpose, the fifteen year limitation for upgrade applications has been suspended until January 1, 1980. Thus, gay veterans may apply for a review of their discharge classification no matter how long ago they left the service. For information and referrals to local counselors or attorneys, please write to Keith Snyder, Veterans Education Project, 1346 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Room 610, Washington, DC 20036; or call (202)466-2244. Indicate your dates and branch of service in your letter or call.

—from *Gay Light*



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NEWSFRONTS

NYSCO Custody

ALBANY—The New York State Coalition of Gay Organizations (NYSCGO), will push as part of this year's legislative goals a Child Custody Bill (a.1416). The bill would amend the New York State Domestic Relations Law to prohibit a judge, in a child custody or visitation rights case, from presuming the fitness or unfitness of a parent based solely on that parent's sexual preference or orientation. Instead, the judge would have to base his/her decision on the overall best interest of the child, taking into account all of the factors that may determine a parent's fitness in a particular case.

from Gay Light

Victory for Berg

A major victory in the struggle to achieve basic civil rights for lesbians and gay men was won by the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc. in the case of former Naval Ensign Vernon E. Berg III. On December 6, 1978, the U.S. District Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia reversed the decision of the U.S. District Court. The lower court had upheld the Navy's discharge of Mr. Berg solely for "engaging in homosexual conduct." The Court of Appeals stated that the military's action was unsupportable because it failed to specifically state the reason for discharge as required by law.

Lambda has just received a grant from the Fund for Legal Justice of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A. to cover the costs of this lengthy litigation. E. Carrington Boggan, the attorney for Lambda in Mr. Berg's case, stated that the progress of the case is unclear at the moment. "It is not now known which path the Navy will choose to take. They could decide to reinstate Mr. Berg for the remainder of his military obligation. This, as far as I can ascertain, would then be the first time an openly gay person was reinstated into the service." Mr. Boggan further indicated that, under the Court of Appeals decision, "the Navy might decide to issue regulations setting forth clear criteria of when a person could be discharged because of homosexual activity or the Navy might decide to develop such guidelines on a case by case basis."

Whichever direction the military takes at this point, the case is certain to remain in the courts. Mr. Boggan will be working closely with the military if it decides to issue regulations. It may be necessary to seek a court order that Mr. Berg is entitled to back pay from the time of his wrongful discharge, or to challenge unconstitutional regulations promulgated by the military.

But it is now quite clear that the Court of Appeals decision will remain a major step forward in the fight for civil rights.

—from The Advocate

Search for Scripts

NEW YORK CITY—The Gay Theatre Alliance (GTA) is seeking play scripts for its **Directory of Gay Plays**. GTA is an association formed last year to foster and promote the development of gay theatre by uniting and representing all regions of the country (as well as other nations) in a communications network, providing resources and information to theatre companies, playwrights, producers and all individuals interested in gay theatre.

The **Directory of Gay Plays** will be a comprehensive listing of plays about gay people. Each listing will contain the title, playwright, character and set requirements, a short description of the plot, where the play was first produced, contacts for rights, and other information. The directory is scheduled for publication in the summer of 1979.

Playwrights who wish to have their work included in the **Directory of Gay Plays** should send a copy of their script(s) to: Terry Helbing, 51 West Fourth Street, Room 300, New York, NY —from GCN

Statement from Body Politic Collective

The Attorney-General of Ontario, Roy McMurtry, has authorized an appeal of the February 14 acquittal of Pink Triangle Press, publishers of **The Body Politic**.

That decision by Judge Sydney Harris was carefully worded and unequivocal. Judge Harris could find no evidence whatsoever to support a conviction. We feel that the appeal is but another link in a chain of related events. The affair began over a year ago with the authorization of a vaguely-worded search warrant which allowed for the seizure of large quantities of valuable records from **The Body Politic** office. None of that material—save a single copy of the Dec/77-Jan/78 issue of the paper itself—was ever introduced as evidence at the trial. This action was followed by the laying of an additional obscenity charge, which was finally dropped without explanation. Next, there was the use of self-confessed anti-gay witnesses to testify against the paper. Then, there

was the raid—and subsequent arrest of 26 men—at a gay club in Toronto in December. Finally, the appeal.

We are appalled that the Attorney-General should want to further harass the gay community by means of an appeal. He has already acknowledged publicly (**Toronto Star**, Feb. 17/79—speaking at a York University's PC Club) that he fully realizes it will be considered as harassment by the gay community. His decision makes his position very clear. He has opted for a course of action which will lend support to the anti-gay rights campaign being organized by the fundamentalist Right wing. To claim it is not a political as well as legal decision is disingenuous nonsense. McMurtry is no friend of gay people, nor should he be accorded further credibility by anyone in the province concerned with the creeping erosion of our civil liberties.

In its latest issue, now on newsstands, **The Body Politic** has reprinted the article

"Men Loving Boys Loving Men" along with an indepth look at the relationship of power and youth sexuality. It can now be read by those many people who have had to rely on distorted police and media descriptions of its content for over a year. The article is merely a symbol. What is at issue is the right of the gay press to responsibly discuss issues of vital concern to our community. We are determined to establish that right.

We are angry at the Attorney General's action, and we know that many gay people share our feelings. We have received tremendous support from both the gay and straight communities throughout this long and expensive ordeal.

With their support, we will continue to fight back.

Statement by Ed Jackson, speaking for **The Body Politic**, March 7, 1979

IRS After Briggs

The Internal Revenue Service has initiated an investigation into the financial dealings of California state Sen. John V. Briggs (R-Fullerton), according to the **Los Angeles Times**.

The IRS probe will reportedly center on three areas of Briggs' personal finances: land transactions, his own insurance business and his campaign funds.

At the same time that Briggs is undergoing IRS scrutiny, he is embarking on yet another antigay campaign, this time against companion bills in the California state legislature that would prohibit job discrimination against gay people. Briggs is allied with the Committee on Moral Concerns (CMC), a group of fundamentalist Christians that is coordinating a letter-writing campaign against the bills (see story this issue). Capitol sources speculate that Briggs may be providing CMC with his own Yes On 6 mailing lists.

—from The Advocate

New Co-Director

New York—The Board of Directors of the National Gay Task Force has announced that Charles F. Bydon, 40, a Seattle insurance executive and gay movement leader, has been appointed to the position of Co-Executive Director, replacing Dr. Bruce Voeller, who resigned in January. Bydon will assume the post on April 9.

NGTF Board Co-Chair Kay Whitlock in announcing the appointment, said: "The Board's decision to appoint Mr. Bydon to the position of Co-Executive Director comes after a long and careful search for and review of qualified applicants. We look forward to a productive and enjoyable working relationship with him."

Voeller Answers

Recent allegations made by the Gay Activist Alliance of New York that Bruce Voeller was using a series of debates with California state Sen. John Briggs for self-aggrandizement and to give Briggs free publicity drew a response from Voeller, former co-executive director of the National Gay Task Force and a founding member of GAA-NY.

Voeller maintains that the debates educate conservative, heterosexual audiences about homosexuality. "Each time I speak I observe the audience shift from coolness toward me to openness and then supportiveness," said Voeller.

"My experience is not that I provide Sen. Briggs with a platform," said Voeller, "but rather that Sen. Briggs provides me with an audience to educate—one I could not pull into the room by myself."

—from The Advocate

Attorney General Appeals Acquittal

TORONTO—Roy McMurtry, the Attorney General of Ontario, announced March 6 that he had authorized an appeal against the acquittal February 14 of Pink Triangle Press, publisher of **The Body Politic**.

Notice of appeal has been served on the press and the three defendants in the original case, Ken Popert (President of Pink Triangle), Ed Jackson (secretary), and Gerald Hannon (treasurer). The appeal lists 8 errors in law alleged to have been made by Provincial Court Judge Sydney M. Harris, and seeks the following "relief": "The Appeal Court set aside the Order dismissing the Information, enter a verdict of guilty, and upon hearing representations, pass a sentence that is warranted in law; or, in the alternative, set aside the

Order dismissing the Information and order a new trial."

Among the "errors in law" alleged to have been made are the following: that Harris erred in holding that in order to convict he must find that the whole of the Dec/77-Jan/78 issue of **The Body Politic** was indecent, immoral or scurrilous, and not just part of it; that Harris erred in holding that the issue must be capable of causing clear incitement to unlawful action; that Harris erred in refusing to interpret the term "immoral"; and that he erred in applying the test of community tolerance.

The appeal will be heard in county court, probably by the fall of 1979.

Not in the Navy

SAN DIEGO, CA—The U.S. Navy has decided not to use a disco tune by the Village People in its recruiting drives.

Rights to the song, "In the Navy," were relinquished to the Navy in return for permission for the Village People to videotape a television commercial for the record aboard the frigate **Reasoner** in San Diego harbor last month.

According to Lt. Cmdr. Fred Gorell of the Navy's Los Angeles information office, Washington officials decided not to use the song on the basis of "budgetary and coordinating requirements." Navy officials deny that their decision had any connection to the reputation of the Village People as a group with a large gay following.

—from GCN

Do It Yourself

Masturbation among men is coming out of the closet, according to a recent study conducted by Forum Magazine. While Kinsey reported that masturbation was mainly a substitute for sexual intercourse and "primarily a phenomenon of younger and unmarried men," the new study shows that masturbation is frequent among all groups of 20,000 men studied. Between 78 and 88 per cent of married and single men chose the bedroom rather than the bathroom for masturbatory activity, and some 33 per cent said frequency of sexual contact did not affect the amount they masturbated.

—from The Advocate

Rep. Dies at Bath

Pennsylvania State Rep. William Shuman was found dead of a heart attack at the Club Miami in October. Shuman held the Boy Scout's Silver Beaver Award, was active in the American Legion and the VFW, and was generally regarded as a "super patriot" and "straight arrow" politician.

from Gay Light

Harvard Changes

CAMBRIDGE, MA—Harvard Law School has adopted a policy forbidding discrimination against homosexuals, according to an announcement from the Law School's Committee on Gay Legal Issues. The policy affects the admissions and placement offices. Any law firm or other organization which discriminates against gay people may not use the Law School's placement office to contact and interview students. Also, admission to the Law School or its graduate programs will not be influenced by an applicant's sexual orientation.

Other law schools whose placement offices forbid discrimination based on sexual orientation include Yale and New York University. New York University has banned the military from its placement office as the result of its policy.

—from GCN

Mayor Threatened

PORTLAND, OR.—"We've already gotten one homosexual mayor. We're going to get the rest." Those were the words of an anonymous caller who threatened the life of Portland Mayor Neil Goldschmidt, shortly after the news of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone's murder had reached the city.

Last year, Goldschmidt was the target of an unsuccessful recall effort because he had proclaimed a local "Gay Pride Week" in Portland. Portland police say they are convinced that the threat was connected to news reports of the San Francisco murders. However, police stressed they had no evidence to connect the threat to any possible plot. Additional police have been assigned to guard Goldschmidt.

from Gay Light