

SOUTHERN VOICE

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Gays Do It
Forsyth Style
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Vol. 1, No. 2

Taking Pride in Our Culture

March 15, 1988

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Score: LEGAL-3, The System-0



Dick Rhodes, Melinda Daniels, Lee Harrington and Paul Garrard Celebrate Victory
photo by Leigh Connor

Gay Man to Run for Ga. House

In a surprise election night move, local gay activist, Dick Rhodes, announced his candidacy for the Georgia House of Representatives in District 46. The seat is being vacated by incumbent Rep. Cathey W. Steinberg (D), who has announced her intention to run for the Public Service Commission.

In response to charges that his will be a single-issue campaign, Rhodes stressed that he is "a gay man running for political office, ... not a gay candidate. As a gay man, I realize that every issue is important to the gay and lesbian community."

Rhodes circulated throughout Atlanta's gay and lesbian community prior to his announcement assessing the support he might receive as Georgia's first openly gay candidate in recent history. The newcomer to Georgia politics found a "reasonably wide base of support" for his candidacy in the traditionally conservative 46th district. District 46 encompasses much of the Lenox Road-Buford Highway area in DeKalb County.

The candidate attributes his burst into politics to the efforts of Lee Harrington and Tim Forchet of LEGAL (Legislate Equality for Gays and Lesbians), who backed his successful

bid to be a Gore delegate to the Democratic National Convention from the 4th Congressional district.

Among the issues that Rhodes will highlight, both during his campaign and the Convention, are drug and alcohol abuse, human rights, anti-lesbian and gay violence and adult illiteracy.

During an exclusive interview, Rhodes stressed his viability as a candidate among mainstream heterosexual voters. He proudly points to an award he received for his volunteer work as a member of the Valley Brook Baptist Church. The award, the Rainbow Award for Positive Christian Living, was given for his work organizing fund-raising dinners to send economically disadvantaged young people to summer camp, and a series of lectures on alcoholism and spiritual economics. The award is given for exemplifying a "positive Christian faith in daily life."

At press time, Rhodes was planning an organizational meeting for his campaign staff. Interested volunteers may call (404) 636-5410 for information. Contributions may be sent to Lynn Merkle, Treasurer, The Dick Rhodes Campaign Fund, P.O. Box 7636, Atlanta, Ga. 30357.

AIDS Bill Awaits Signature

The Georgia House of Representatives and the Georgia Senate overwhelmingly passed the Committee of Conference substitute to HB 1281, the Omnibus AIDS Bill on March 7, the last day of the 1988 General Assembly Session. The bill now awaits Governor Joe Frank Harris' signature before becoming law.

The final version of the bill, which was strongly revised from Representative George Hooks House Health and Ecology Sub-committee's version, was rated a 6 on a scale of 10 by Gil Robison, Lobbyist for the Georgia AIDS Legislative Coalition.

Robison reported feeling "satisfied that we got the worst provisions (of the original draft) taken out." This same attitude was mirrored by other AIDS activists and organizations.

The bill is extensive in its exercise of the State's police powers, and mentions AIDS prevention-education only in the opening section, which states, "The Department of Human Resources is encouraged to continue its efforts to educate all Georgians about the disease, its causative agent, and its means of transmission."

The Atlanta-based Democratic club, LEGAL (Legislate Equality for Gays and Lesbians), hosted an Election Central party the night of the primary elections at Backstreet, a local bar, to track incoming results, and support the hopes of their five delegate candidates to the Democratic National Convention.

The five delegate candidates were Gil Robison and Joe Williford from the 5th Congressional district, and Dick Rhodes, Melinda Daniels and Paul Garrard from the 4th Congressional district. All of the five delegates-elect were slated to Senator Albert Gore's (D-TN) campaign, and were pinning their hopes to reach the Party's July convention on Gore's ability to win votes in the metropolitan 4th and 5th districts. As the night progressed, Gore, The Rev. Jesse Jackson (D) and Gov. Michael Dukakis (D-MA) battled back and forth across the state of Georgia for the lion's share of the State's Democratic vote.

All of those present at Election Central quickly ceded the 5th district to Jackson, who swept all six of the district's delegates. *CBS News* Anchorperson, Dan Rather, predicted that Jackson would win as early as 8:00 PM EST.

In the 4th district, however, everyone watched with anticipation as Gore, Jackson and Dukakis constantly replaced each other as front-runner in the heated race for delegates. (See *Southern Voice* Volume 1, Number 1, for a detailed analysis of the Georgia Democratic Party's system of delegate selection.)

When the last votes were tallied, Gore sneaked by Jackson with 21,461 (30.6%) votes. Jackson earned 21,306 (30.4%) votes, and Dukakis finished the night a very close third with 20,036 (28.6%) votes. Due to Gore's winning margin of 155 votes, Rhodes—a gay man, and Daniels—a lesbian, will be going to the Convention, along with Rita Valenti, A Georgia Nursing Association Gore delegate, who promised during the January caucuses to support lesbian/gay rights and AIDS issues at the Convention. Garrard, a gay man, will be attending as an alternate.

A jubilant Lee Harrington, President of LEGAL, proclaimed at a press conference, "Aren't bloc voting and slates nice words in Georgia tonight?" referring to a traditional reticence among gay and lesbian voters to band together and vote as one unit, the tactic that enabled blacks to gain political power in the early civil rights movement.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Gore Campaigns for Gay and Lesbian Vote in California

San Francisco - Senator Albert Gore (D-TN), who campaigned as the only conservative Democratic presidential hopeful during the Southern primaries, has shown a more liberal face while campaigning in California. Speaking at a news conference in San Francisco, Gore said, "We would eliminate (anti-gay) discrimination through an executive order banning it in the federal government and through leadership from a president who understands why such prejudice has to be a thing of the past."

Gore, whose presidential aspirations for support in the gay and lesbian community were nearly destroyed by a reportedly misquoted, homophobic statement made in Atlanta during the Super Tuesday races; has recovered from his faux pas to make impressive inroads with community leaders in California, most notably San Mateo County supervisor Tom Nolan.

Grassroots Mobilization Strengthened by Merger

Washington, D.C. - The Fairness Fund, a two-year-old gay/lesbian grassroots mobilization group, has merged into the Human Rights Campaign Fund, a political action committee working to secure full human rights for gay men and lesbians and responsible federal policies to fight AIDS.

"By joining forces with the extraordinarily successful Campaign Fund, we give added visibility, clout and resources to our important grassroots initiative," said the Rev. Troy Perry, Co-chair of the Fairness Fund's National Mailgram Campaign and founder of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

Fairness Fund constituent mobilization, in the form of thousands of letters, mailgrams and calls, will dramatically enhance the Campaign Fund's lobbying on Capitol Hill and improve chances of making legislative gains on AIDS and fairness issues.

"We have smart, articulate lobbyists and generous donors who make our sizeable political campaign contributions possible. But we need the strong grassroots mobilization initiative the Fairness Fund provides. Now we can maximize our program efforts," said Victor Basile, executive director of the Human Rights Campaign Fund.

The Fairness Fund will retain its name, staff, current address and telephone numbers and will continue its present efforts, including:

- * The National Mailgram Campaign, with its "proxy system" and two 800 telephone numbers. The "proxy system" allows preauthorized mailgrams to be sent in the names of its thousands of "subscribers" when legislative action calls for constituent pressure.

One of the four projects that came out of the recent War Conference was a nationwide communications network. This will include an emergency mobilization and response mechanism. The Fairness Fund will provide the initial foundation for such an effort.

The 800 numbers facilitate convenient, inexpensive communication to Members of

Congress by allowing callers across the country to select from already-prepared messages, for a small charge on their phone bill.

- * The grassroots network of State Coordinators, congressional district Field Associates and local Organizing Committees.

- * The Congressional Action Alert system to inform key local leaders and organizations about fast-breaking legislative developments.

As a new project of the Campaign Fund, the Fairness Fund will soon launch a series of regional conferences focusing on lobbyist strategies, issue mobilization and grassroots fundraising.

The combined efforts of the Fairness Fund and the Human Rights Campaign Fund guarantee strong gay and lesbian representation in national legislative matters.

Anti-Gay Bill Approved in Britain

London - An anti-gay bill has received approval by the British House of Commons, after strong support by the conservative government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

The controversial plan bans local city councils from allowing tax money to be used in a way that will "promote" homosexuality. Gay and lesbian groups, along with Labor Party leaders and British celebrities, have opposed the bill, saying it is bigoted, encourages bigotry, and that the vagueness of its language leaves the door open to even more discrimination. The bill was approved by a majority vote in the House of Commons after a heated debate, despite protests and street demonstrations. In the latest demonstration, five lesbians were arrested after they chained themselves to the gates around Buckingham Palace. The only step left for the bill to become law is approval by the Queen, which is expected to take place next month.

Gay Attorney Sues Insurance Company

Washington, D.C. - A gay attorney has filed suit against an insurance company, charging he was denied a disability policy because he is gay.

Mauro Montoya, legal services director for the Whitman-Walker Clinic, which offers medical and legal counseling mostly to the gay community in Washington, said he was turned down for the policy even though he is in excellent health.

In his suit, he says the insurance company, Connecticut Mutual, refused to issue the policy citing a skin condition, Molluscum Contagiosum. He says the skin rash was not acquired through sexual contact, and had cleared up completely through medication more than a year before he applied for the policy, adding it is being used as a pretext to discriminate against him for being gay.

Montoya is suing under a District of Columbia law which specifically bans insurance companies from refusing to provide insurance on the basis of sexual orientation, job or marital status, or AIDS test results.

He says this is the first lawsuit to be brought under the two-year-old law.

Connecticut Mutual says it does not discriminate against homosexuals, but refuses to comment on the \$2.5 million dollar suit. Montoya has asked the City to join in the suit on grounds that the insurance company violated city law, entitling the City to civil penalties. A spokeswoman for the mayor said she didn't know whether or not the City would join in the legal action.

Gay Catholics Arrested

New York - Members of the gay Catholic group, Dignity, held another protest demonstration in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. Dignity had vowed to continue demonstrating on the first Sunday of the month, when Cardinal O'Connor celebrates mass, to protest the Church's stance on homosexuality and the resulting ban on the use of Church facilities by the group.

Sixteen demonstrators were arrested during the latest protest in which they formed a human cross by lying down on Fifth Avenue in front of the church. They were quickly arrested, charged with disorderly conduct, a misdemeanor, and then released.

Cardinal O'Connor, who did not celebrate mass due to illness, has said he has nothing against homosexuals, but must uphold the Church's teaching that sexual activity between members of the same sex is sinful because it takes place out of marriage and does not lead to procreation.

Supreme Court to Rule on Firing of Gay Man from Spy Agency

Washington, D.C. - The Supreme Court has agreed to review the case of a gay man fired from the National Security Agency, the most secretive of the U.S. intelligence agencies. The Court will decide whether the NSA should have granted a hearing before firing the admittedly homosexual employee.

The case involves a man who had worked at the agency since 1968. In 1982 he told security officials that he had had several homosexual encounters during vacations abroad. He was fired in 1984, because of the "indiscriminate pattern of activity which invites the risk of security exploitation," not because he is a homosexual, according to governmental officials.

The firing was appealed, and a U.S. Appeals Court said that the man, whose name has not been released, was entitled under the law to an administrative hearing before being fired, despite the fact that his high-level security clearance had been revoked after he admitted his homosexuality.

The Reagan administration decided to appeal the ruling, saying that it makes it harder for the government to remove employees who are security risks and imperil efforts to protect the security of the country. The Supreme Court will issue its decision during the term that begins in October.

South African Athletes Barred from Gay Games

Vancouver - In a radical departure from the philosophy of Gay Games founder Tom Waddell and the Games original governing board, the San Francisco Arts and Athletics, Vancouver, British Columbia, sponsors of the Gay Games III have decided to bar South African athletes from competing in the 1990 event.

The Vancouver policy directly counters Waddell's policy of inclusion of all entrants. The original policy stressed that all athletes represented themselves rather than their country of origin.

Speaking of the process that led the Canadian sponsors to deviate from past action,

Barry McDell, spokesperson for the Games said, "A fair amount of learning took place. When we started this we were led to believe that all gay South African organizations are integrated. It turns out that's not true. The powerful gay organizations are white and refuse to address apartheid." McDell added that "the one black South African organization is in favor of the international sports boycott."

At press time, the board of the San Francisco Arts and Athletics were planning a March meeting to discuss the matter. Some parties were suggesting the discussion was irrelevant, as no South African athletes have applied for admission to the Games.

Gene-Gabriel Moore Leaves ETC.

Atlanta - Gene-Gabriel Moore, gay columnist and News Editor of *ETC.*, a local gay and lesbian weekly, announced his resignation from the magazine to finish writing his second novel in a column dated March 11, 1988. Moore, known for his evocative writing style and ability to spotlight-sometimes painfully-the weaknesses of the gay and lesbian community, will continue to write freelance columns for *ETC.* until leaving for Ireland to complete his book.

In his last column, Moore reviewed the year he spent covering Atlanta and gay/lesbian politics. He noted the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, the Helms amendment to the AIDS budget appropriation, and the continuing local controversy of Woman-Only space.

As a conclusion, Moore admonishes the Atlanta community, "Never forget that you are not alone. Whatever else there is under the sweet sun, there will always be men and women who express their love in ways that did not please the Levites in the rocky wilderness 35 centuries ago...It has been true since homo sapiens crept out of the African dust, and it will be true when at long last our middling star falls into itself and in one brilliant instant explodes half way to Alpha Centauri. Boom."

Scandinavian Airlines Testing Pilots for AIDS

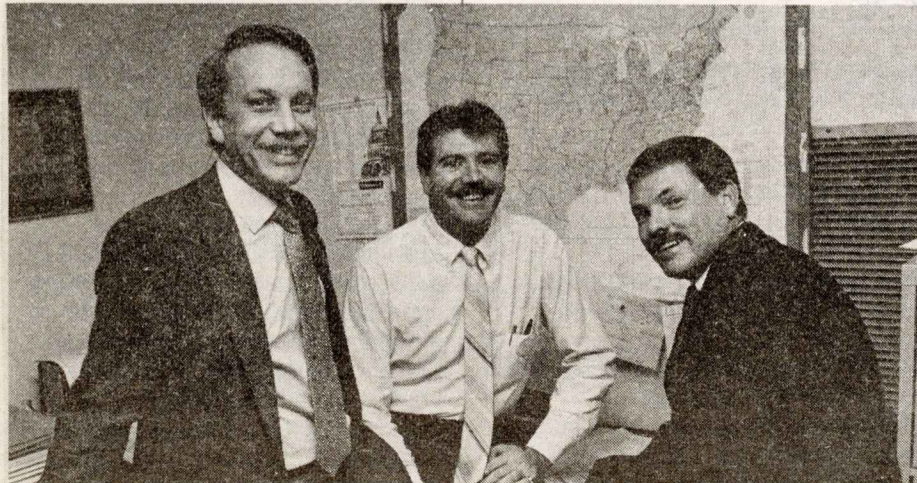
Copenhagen - Scandinavian Airlines has decided to start mandatory AIDS testing for all pilots applying for jobs with SAS. According to a spokesperson for SAS, people who test positive for the HIV virus will not be offered jobs, for "safety" reasons, since "pilots must be 100 percent fit."

The airline said the test will be absolutely confidential, and doctors will not tell the airline why the applicant failed the medical test. SAS is owned by the governments of Denmark, Sweden and Norway, and it currently employs more than 1400 pilots. For pilots already working with the company, the test is voluntary.

Local Lesbian Activist Joins NGLTF Board

Atlanta - Cathy Woolard has been invited to join the Board of Directors of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) as an interim member prior to the Fall election of new Board members. The appointment was confirmed at an Executive Committee Board meeting on February 25 and reported by Peter Fowler, Board Co-chair. The next Board meeting will be held in Washington, D.C. on March 25-27.

NGLTF has a Board of Directors composed of 24 members, 12 male and 12 female. The nominations committee was concerned with the lack of Southern representation on the current Board and made a pro-active effort to seek candidates from this region. Says Woolard, "I'm excited by the opportunity to continue my efforts to bring more of the national gay and lesbian agenda back home as well as the chance to let leadership from the 'twin towers' (LA & NY) know what Southern lesbians and gay men see as national and regional priorities."



(L-R) Vic Basile, HRCF Executive Director, Lee Bush, National Field Director, Stephen Endean, Fairness Fund Project Director. Photo by Doug Hinckley/The Washington Blade

Debuque Lesbians and Gays Plan Forsyth-Style March for April

Last September 19, Stacie Neldaughter, Ginny Lynns and the rest of the active but small lesbian and gay Community of Debuque, Iowa, held their "First Ever" Gay Pride March and Rally. The local media was very attentive, updating the small, predominantly Catholic community of the Pride march plans almost nightly. Even though Mayor James Brady had spoken out against them, and gays and lesbians in general, by characterizing them as child molesters, Lynns and Neldaughter were hopeful for a good turnout. What they got was not exactly what they had expected.

"We didn't know," said Lynns, "that there was such an undercurrent of real anti-gay sentiment here."

As the marchers began to march that September afternoon, they found that they had to walk a gauntlet of homophobia as several hundred bigots lined the streets hurling insults, eggs and rocks. The hate-filled mob climbed atop buildings for better vantage-points from which to throw and shout. A local photographer, James Shaffer, stated that most of the egg-throwers were teenagers from an "alternative" school in Debuque. "They were lobbing the eggs; it was impossible to determine specifically who was throwing" he stated.

"Some people were even giving kids money to buy more eggs to throw!" Lynns recalled.

As the attacks continued, the marchers joined a group of supporters for their rally, while the police stood by - idle.

"The police did nothing to stop the violence", Lynn stated.

Battered, bruised and messed by the garbage thrown by their harassers, the Gay and Lesbian residents of Debuque received a cruel picture of what they were really up against.

Outnumbered 10-to-1, the marchers decided that they cannot do it alone. They have issued a nationwide call for help.

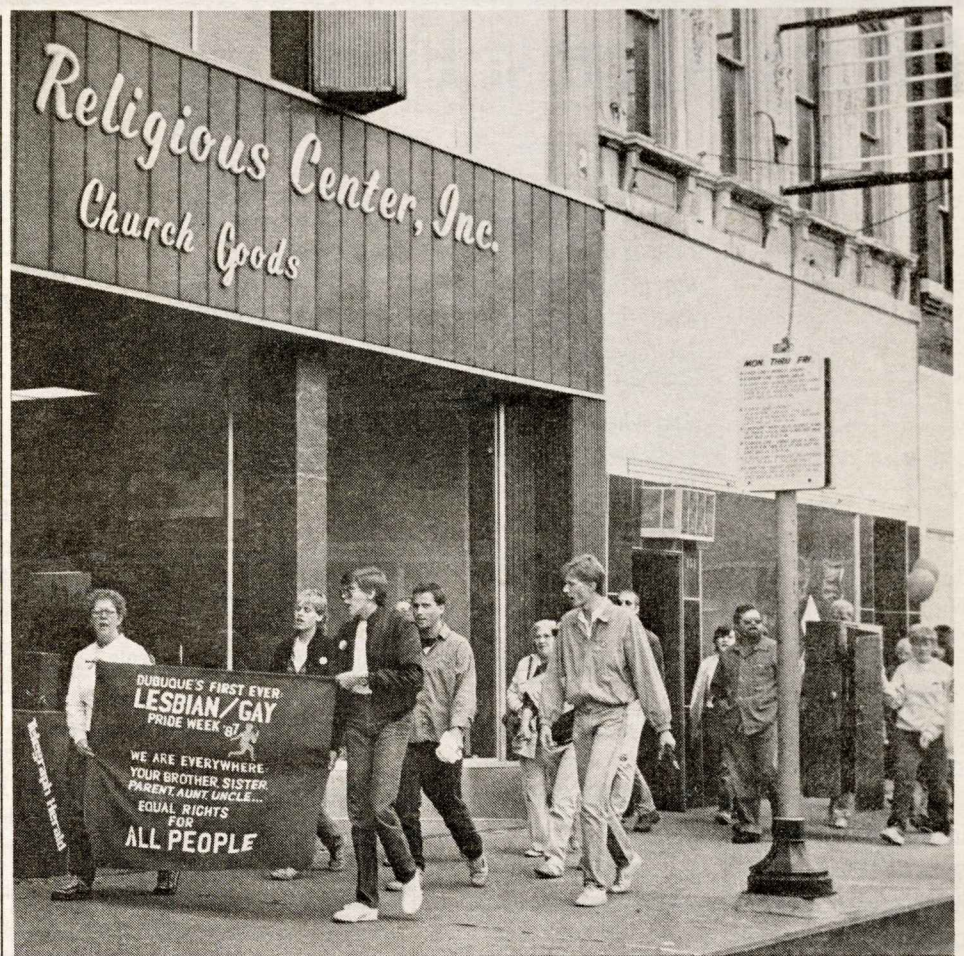
With the cooperation of the local chapter of the National Organization for Women, a handful of activists in this small community have formed NOW/FLAG - The National Organization of Women/Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Together with the NGLTF (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force), the UFMCC (United Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches), and P-FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), they are arranging a second march and putting out a "Call to March" to activists around the country on April 30, 1988. This "Forsyth-style March" is designed to make all of America aware of the oppression of and violence directed at lesbians and gays that is so manifest in places like Debuque.

Comments Lynns, "We call it the 'Forsyth County' march of the lesbian and gay rights movement because after racist attacks on black people in the Georgia county, thousands and thousands of people turned out for a peaceful, but powerful and empowering march."

Sue Hyde, Privacy Project director of NGLTF, will speak at the rally, scheduled for 1:00 P.M. in Washington Park.

Until their strategy becomes more solidified, NOW/FLAG is keeping a low profile with the local media. Nationally, however, the *Oprah Winfrey Show* has voiced some interest in taping a show there.

NOW/FLAG has high hopes for this march and have information on lodging and other important factors for those who are interested. Lynns hopes that these calls will drown out the obscene harrassing phone calls from the march. "Every Gay and Lesbian organization in the



State is giving us their support," Lynns said. "A turnout of 200-300 people would be great." Of course, more would be fantastic.

If you would like more information, you may call: Ginny Lynns (319) 583-9018 or Stacie Neldaughter (319) 582-5352. If you

wish to make a donation to help offset organization costs, please write to: NOW/FLAG, Post Office Box 495, Debuque, IA 52001.

- Karl Boyce

SCORE

Continued from Front Page

Harrington continued to say, "This is the emergence of LEGAL and the gay and lesbian vote as a political power to be reckoned with in the state of Georgia. Today we proved that the system can be forced to work for gays and lesbians, if only we get involved and organized. I have never been more proud of our community."

Rhodes directly credited the lesbian and gay community with Gore's victory in the 4th. According to Rhodes, "Those 155 votes that gave him (Gore) the winning margin were people that Melinda, Paul, LEGAL and myself convinced to vote for him. We campaigned hard, getting people who don't normally vote in primaries, or who were leaning toward another candidate, to punch the Gore ticket."

"Those who think this was only the work

of a little band of gays in decadent old Atlanta are very mistaken. As the thousands of closeted gays and lesbians, people (who) sit side-by-side with you in church every Sunday in Savannah, Macon, Columbus, Augusta, Albany, Athens, as well as Atlanta, all decide it's in their best interest to stop being ashamed of themselves and start asserting themselves, we'll have gay and lesbian delegates in every district in the state of Georgia, and more, in 1992."

LEGAL will now turn its attention to the Democratic Convention, where Rhodes, Daniels, and Garrard will join the large lesbian and gay caucus to force the Democratic Party to recognize and support their agenda. Looking past July, Harrington looks forward to the general election, where in addition to trying to influence the national campaigns, LEGAL will be supporting gay and lesbian candidates for local and statewide races. Lesbian and gay candidates are rumored to be assessing their chances in other races.

AIDS Bill

Continued from Front Page

The Committee of Conference substitute bill removed the controversial AIDS Battery and AIDS Assault provisions of the original draft. The Representatives and Senators agreed instead, to revise the felony reckless endangerment statute, to include AIDS transmission crimes including sodomy; sharing IV needles; soliciting for prostitution or donating blood, blood products, or organs/body parts. The sentence for reckless endangerment is no more than ten years.

The confidentiality requirements of the bill are vague, but do offer some protections to PWA/ARC's. In most cases, AIDS confidential information will be given the same level of protection as psychiatric records.

The bill does, however, give discretion to the Department of Human Resources to disseminate AIDS confidential information among parties it deems appropriate. Possible persons a HIV seropositive, PWA, or PWARC's status might be made available to include a: physicians assistant; podiatrist; funeral director; professional counselor, social worker, or marriage and family therapist; psychologist; and/or administrative, clerical, and support personnel.

It is important to note that the confidentiality of AIDS information is considered waived if the person at question, or their appointees: in any manner files an insurance claim for benefits; places any aspect of the patients medical condition at issue in a civil or criminal proceedings; or "is involved in a dispute regarding coverage under any insurance policy or benefit plan."

The final version of the bill still contains

mandatory testing requirements for prisoners, and persons entering pleas of guilty or nolo contendere to AIDS transmitting crimes.

Anonymous testing has, for the moment, been allowed to continue at the discretion of the Department of Human Resources. The Department may at any time in the future begin requiring that the names and addresses of individuals who test positive for HIV antibodies be reported.

The most contentious section of the bill requiring consent prior to testing for HIV antibodies was decided in favor of prior consent. Except in cases of medical emergency, a patient must be given a pamphlet, to be prepared by the Department of Human Resources, which explains the medical and social effects of taking the HIV antibody test. **If the patient touches or takes into his/her possession the pamphlet, consent is considered to be given.** A patient must refuse the pamphlet in order to deny the physician permission to administer the test(s).

The Department of Human Resources is also directed by the bill to prepare a pamphlet to be given to a patient after the results of any HIV antibody screening test are delivered. This is the only form of counseling the physician or health care provider is required to give to a patient.

AIDS and civil rights activists across the State are waiting for the Governor to sign the bill, before announcing their plans of future action. Several different sources have privately confirmed, however, that they plan to fight the bill, using public pressure and the justice system to block the implementation of the law when it takes affect.

-Chris Duncan

VOICES

What is your biggest fear about coming out or being out?

"Having people find out before I have the opportunity to tell them. I would like to tell them myself, if I choose to."

Julie Gaby
Decatur, Georgia

"Not getting support from other Gay men and Lesbians. If they are not there backing you, you could get your head bashed in."

Charles Haver
Atlanta, Georgia

"Life threatening things from homophobics, Gay bashings, etc. Also, having my picture published in the *Journal-Constitution*. I'm afraid it would affect my job and people that I'm not out to"

Shelley Robins
Doraville, Georgia

"Someone would terrorize me because they don't understand. I have made the choice to be out."

Mike Edwards
Atlanta, Georgia

Do You Know Something We Don't Know?

Southern Voice seeks news tips and inside information of interest to our community.

Call Chris Cash or Chris Duncan at 584-2104

Litany Against Fear

I must not fear.
 Fear is the mind-killer.
 Fear is the little death
 that brings total obliteration.
 I will face my fear.
 I will permit it to pass
 over me and through me.
 And when it has gone past,
 I will turn the inner eye to see its path.
 Where the fear has gone,
 there will be nothing.
 Only I will remain.

-from *Dune*, by Frank Herbert

Fear of physical violence. Fear of ostracism. Fear of oppression. Fear of public ridicule. Fear of being ourselves.

A stream of unsettling fears that too many lesbians and gay men allow to flood their dreams and suffocate their lives.

It is appropriate to be afraid - at certain times, in certain places. Common sense dictates caution in dangerous places. Locking one's house while gone, driving only when sober, and practicing safe sex are all cautionary techniques for living a fulfilling life in today's world. But never leaving home, going near a highway, or having sex are examples of allowing fear to control, rather than caution to guide, one's life.

It is never healthy to lead a fearful life. Fear transcends all boundaries and becomes destructively addictive. It is deceptive.

The ultimate Catch-22 of allowing fear to "safeguard" and control one's life is the ultimate loss of a life-time of opportunities and love. Parents, family and friends kept at a distance are denied the opportunity to know their gay and lesbian loved one; we lose by unfairly pre-judging and condemning them.

A life controlled by fear is always hollow and superficial.

Fear feeds upon itself and grows at an exponential rate. The fear of other people's reaction to "coming out" is often misplaced and unnecessary. Many gay men and lesbians tell stories of days of tension-filled expectation as the dreaded confrontation approaches. The dialogue will run. . . Homo: "I'm queer (or gay or lesbian)." Hetero: "Yeah, I figured that out a while back. What's on TV tonight?"

Fear drains energy from its victim. It leaves its owner at the mercy of the world; it defies a positive, constructive solution to a problematic situation.

Sometimes our worst fears do come true. Sometimes we do lose the comfort of the people we love. But the relief of not hiding overcomes the sense of loss, with time.

Lesbians and gay men must learn to face their fears and recognize them as an invalid remnant of the fight vs. flight phenomenon. Caution is the proper attitude; it is life-promoting and life-sustaining. Caution is sensitive to a changing world. Our collective fear as a community must be conquered before we will ever truly be free.

JUST SAY NO... TO TESTING

The Omnibus AIDS Bill underwent its final changes, and was passed by the Legislature on Monday, March 7. The bill now awaits Gov. Harris' signature. Nothing can be done to change or stop the bill. What we must do is learn to live within the constraints which it imposes on our community.

Several victories were won regarding issues such as the level of confidentiality of HIV testing results and the legal ramifications for persons charged with "AIDS transmitting crimes". The confidentiality of test results mandated by this bill, is similar to the confidentiality given to psychiatric information, the most closely guarded type of medical record. Few types of behavior now can be construed as "AIDS transmitting crimes". Previous forms of the bill included solicitation of sodomy, very loosely interpreted, as one such crime.

More important in this piece of legislation is the issue of patient consent prior to testing. Members of the Medical Association of Georgia, together with third party payers (various types of medical insurance providers) insisted that patients need only be informed of the testing, with no mention of patient consent to have such tests performed. As the bill stands, anyone seen by their private physician or admitted to a hospital for any reason can be tested for HIV anti-bodies if they are told that the test is going to be performed, and they are issued a brochure which discusses the interpretation of test results.

This aspect of the bill directly affects a tremendous number of people, since it is very likely that everyone will see a doctor or be admitted to a hospital. The key to defeating the system is **DO NOT AGREE TO ROUTINE TESTING**. Once the results are a matter of medical record, they can possibly be subpoenaed into court in matters other than "AIDS transmitting crimes", such as drunk driving charges, possession of drugs and even child custody disputes. Insurance companies are not required to continue medical coverage of individuals who have been tested. In addition, there is some evidence to suggest that insurance companies will discontinue coverage of individuals even if their test is negative. Without understanding that individuals are tested as a routine part of preadmission hospital tests, these companies assume that if an individual has had an HIV anti-bodies test, he/she must consider themselves at risk of contracting AIDS.

It is important that we, as a community, do two things. First, contact your private physician and discuss his/her policy of HIV testing. Physicians need to understand the social as well as economic issues associated with the test. Make it clear to your

physician that unless there is evidence to suggest HIV infection, you do not want the test performed as part of a routine battery of blood tests. Second, should you be informed of such a policy, probably at a hospital or emergency room, **DO NOT** accept the brochure. By accepting the brochure, you have complied with the stipulations in the AIDS bill, and offered your consent to be tested. The anonymous test sites continue to be the best place to obtain HIV testing.

It is important that we understand the legal, social and economic ramifications of this legislation. Neither the Legislature as a whole, nor the Medical Association of Georgia had the interest of our community in mind when the bill was written. Working within the constraints of the bill, we can take steps to ensure confidentiality through our own initiatives.

- Linda Meredith

Letters

Gay Prisoner Speaks Out

To the Editor:

I recieved your wonderful letter and the issue of *Southern Voice*. I must say that from the look of your first issue of the *Voice*, it will last a long time. I enjoyed it very much and have already passed it along to a gay friend of mine in here.

I tried to compare this issue with *Gay Community News* out of Boston, and I must say, I like the *Voice* much better. I very much appreciate the free subscription.

I'm hoping you can print my letter in the next issue as I feel a need to share what is happening with me inside prison simply because I'm gay.

First of all, I am in this dump for receiving and concealing stolen property. I am doing a two- and- a -half to five- year sentence. I should have gone to a camp or a minimum or medium security facility, but because I'm gay, I was sent inside. If I was not gay, I would have been paroled within a year of being sentenced. But because I'm gay, I was placed here, in a closed maximum-security walled prison.

I am treated like scum by everyone simply because I am gay and have a lot of feminity about me. Here's an example: I have been in segregation, "the hole", for fourteen months because a guard said I grabbed his hand, which is considered assault and battery. I never touched the guy. But, because he said I did, I've been in this hole for fourteen months. There is no exercise, no yard, no phone calls, no personal property, no television, no radio, and only two showers per week, if you're lucky. It's very lonely and boring. My family has long since abandoned me and I never get any mail.

That should give you an idea of what gays go through in the prison system. I'll be leaving in ten months so I must get myself together, make some plans, etc. At this point in time, I have nobody and no plans.

SOUTHERN VOICE

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Yesterday, I took my first AIDS test. I haven't until now because I have been very careful in the last eight years. I've only had sex with two people, so I never really worried about it, considering myself safe. But for the past few months I've been feeling pretty bad. Last week I discovered a large lump on my neck, just below my ear. I was, and still am, scared to death. I saw the doctor yesterday and he wanted me to take the AIDS test, so I signed for it.

I'm just shocked, though. How could it be AIDS? I've been so very careful. I'm scared. I can't sleep or eat and I get headaches every day. Well, if the test is positive, I'm dead, and these people will put me through a living hell.

I really don't think I got it sexually. The two people I've had sex with were straight men, and they weren't IV drug users. I could have contracted it here, maybe through a used razor. Many times they make us use used razors if we want to shave. Oh well, I'll just have to see what the test says when it comes back.

I would really like to get some correspondence going with your readers... gay/lesbian/straight, it's no concern, just correspondence and the need for closeness, sharing and caring. I really need some friends. I'll answer all letters, but please ask them to include postage, and a photo if possible.

I'm going to close this letter for now and get it in the mail to you.

Respect and love,
Terry Barkley
#173128
PO Box E
Jackson, Mich. 49204

Where's ALFA?

To The Editor:

Thank you so much for the good work you and others invested in the first issue of *Southern Voice*. We have needed a thorough lesbian and gay newspaper generated in our region for a long time. I was glad to see the focus on AIDS as well as other political news, and I particularly liked Rebecca Ranson's article on AIM.

I would like to see a more comprehensive calendar of events published, and wondered why our oldest organization in Atlanta, ALFA, was not listed under "organizations". I look forward to the ways the paper will grow and change as it takes on a character and personality of its own.

It is important that lesbians and gay men support *Southern Voice* through subscriptions and that businesses do so through advertising. We need the political and news coverage; we need the visibility; we need our many voices to be expressed in *Southern Voice*.

Congratulations on a good beginning.

Sincerely,

Linda Bryant
Atlanta, GA

(Editors Note: Thanks for the words of support. *Southern Voice* welcomes all lesbian/gay organizations to be a part of the Registry. We sent letters to 47 organizations in the metro area and asked

them to supply us with information on their group. We only print those who respond, in order to assure correct information.)

Bringing Anti-Gay Violence Out of the Closet

To the Editor:

I looked in the mirror tonight, between my breasts and down to my stomach. The scars are fading. If only the mind could heal as quickly as the body. My thoughts today are as painful as the blade that carved my flesh.

It was August, 1987. I came out to my high school sweetheart and he walked away in disgust. One week later, he invited me to a party. I was happy he had contacted me again. Maybe we could still be friends. I went, we danced and then four guys held me down while my "boyfriend" raped me and carved, "gay", "lesbian", and "women" on my chest and stomach. Convinced that the heterosexual world would perform their own surgery on my experience, I remained obediently and oppressively silent. The days, weeks and months passed. My story, shared only with my closest friends, was quietly set aside...perhaps trying to fade with the physical scars.

Tonight, I realized this experience not only will not fade, but will either silence my screams or give me a voice to fight for my life. Once again, I must exit through another closet door and proclaim-" I am a proud lesbian and I will not be oppressed!"

-Teri Kai

(Editor's Note: *Southern Voice* received this piece in the mail with a request from the author to print it so others who have experienced anti-lesbian/gay violence will know that they are not alone.)

Kudos

To the Editor:

Thank you for your article on the Presidential candidates and their views. Their positions on subjects effecting our community and the nation will definitely be a deciding factor in the upcoming election.

Your paper dared to address issues often avoided by, or considered unimportant by, other papers. I am an individual who appreciates hard-core facts. I found your article on the candidates, and your entire paper, an asset to our community, city and state.

I salute and commend *Southern Voice* for its efforts to enlighten all of us on vital issues. Your professionalism and genuine concern are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Curtis T.

"Outgroups" Underrepresented

To The Editor:

I must tell you I was pleasantly surprised to see what a quality publication you have managed to put together for gays and lesbians in Atlanta. Finally, a "newsy"

newspaper that gives me the information I need about relevant issues so that I can make my own decisions. Hats off to everyone involved.

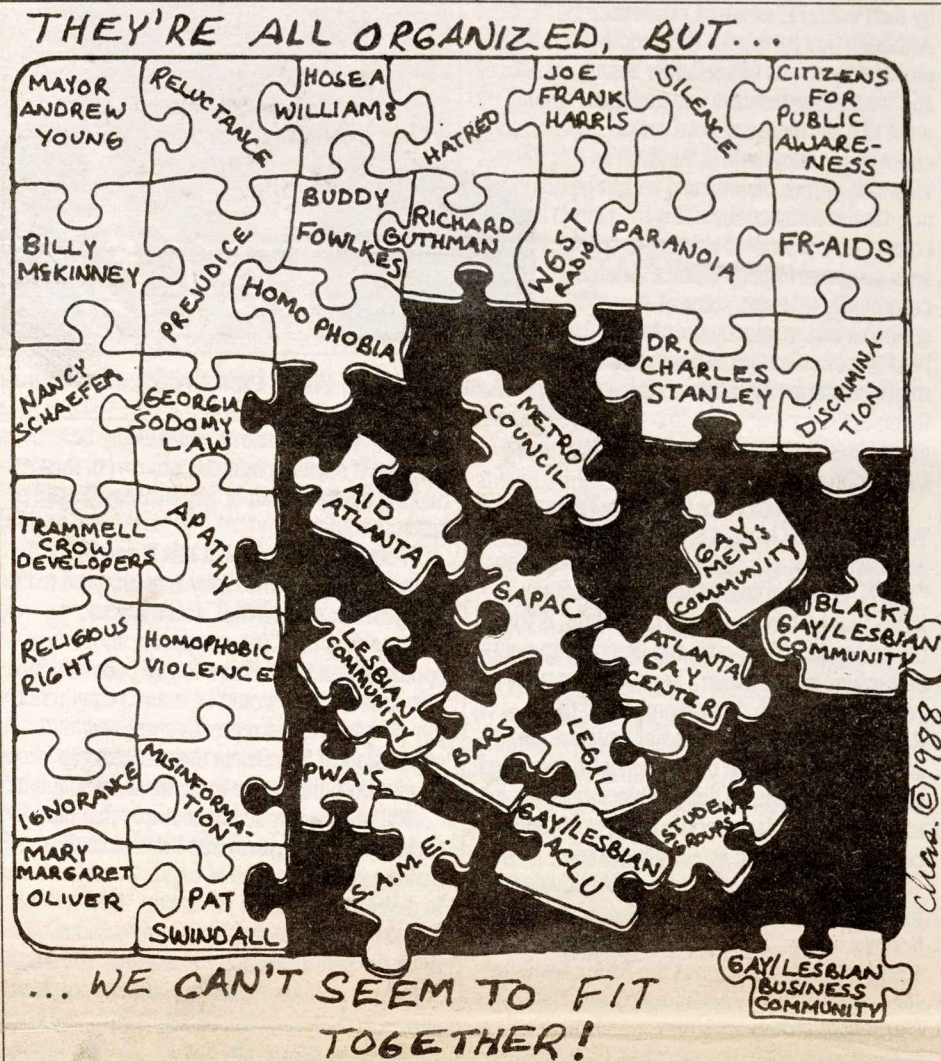
There is something, however, I would like to see more of. I think there still needs to be more coverage of issues specifically relating to people of color. Even the lesbian and gay issues you tackle can take on a different cast when viewed from a different perspective. It's strange to think that even such a minority as gays and

lesbians have their own "outgroups", but there are groups of people whose voices are still not sufficiently represented.

Overall, your paper is extremely professional and informational. Please find enclosed my check for \$20 to cover a year's subscription. I'm already looking forward to the next issue!

Sincerely,

Kalvin Rudyard



VISA Clipping Will Continue

The "Clip Your VISA" Campaign, protesting VISA's support of the anti-gay U.S. Olympic Committee, will continue through the next year, the organizer says.

Gay publisher, Sasha Alyson, who began the campaign in August, explained that he originally he saw it as a shortterm project.

"My first thought was that we should simply register our protest with them, then move on to other things," he said. "But VISA's response has been appalling. They have steadfastly refused to address the issue of homophobia."

Alyson began the Clip Your VISA campaign after reading an ad that stated, "everytime you use VISA, we'll contribute to the U.S. Olympic team."

"After the viciously homophobic way the U.S. Olympic Committee treated Tom

Waddell and the Gay Games, I had no intention of using my VISA card again, and I decided to encourage others to join me," Alyson explained. "Several hundred people have sent in half of their card as a sign that they agree."

The clipped cards are being used to make a banner memorializing Gay Games founder, Tom Waddell. "We displayed the banner at the March on Washington, and will continue to display it at other events," Alyson stated.

VISA cardholders who want to participate in the campaign should cut their card in half, send one half to VISA and the other half to: Sasha Alyson, Alyson Publications, 40 Plympton St., Boston, MA 02118.

(Reprinted from *The Long Beach Chronicle*, Jan. 14, 1988).

Viewpoints is part of a continuing effort to provide a forum of opinion for our community. We invite your ideas, comments and feelings and your responses to ideas expressed in this space.

The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of *Southern Voice*. Submissions should be typed, double-spaced and no longer than four pages. Mail to:

Southern Voice/Viewpoints
P.O. Box 54719
Atlanta, GA
30308

New Alliance Party/Questions Still Linger

The New Alliance Party (NAP) was founded in New York City in 1979, and on August 21, 1988, in Atlanta, Georgia, declared its "birthing" as America's third independent party. The black-led, multi-racial party boasts of a first in history. Lenora B. Fulani, Ph.D., NAP's presidential candidate for the 1988 general elections, is the first independent African-American woman certified to receive federal primary matching funds by the Federal Elections Committee. Although this party's for-the-people philosophy seems theoretically sound and what some lesbians and gay men want to hear, there has been much controversy surrounding the NAP's views on homosexuality and its alleged neo-fascist connections. This controversy prompted a desire to speak with progressive people in the Atlanta community to assess some of the concerns and to take these issues to the NAP for clarification. There were two major concerns: 1) NAP's social therapeutic approach to homosexuality, and 2) NAP's connection with Lyndon LaRouche.



Lenora Fulani, Ph.D., 1988 Presidential Candidate

The spokesperson for the NAP, Tammy Weinstein, the Georgia State Coordinator, assessed the party's platform on homosexuality. "The NAP, regardless of whether or not the individual members are gay or straight, is for the protection of the civil and democratic rights of lesbians and gay men. We see that gay people, along with other members of the Rainbow Movement, must fight against the assault on gay people by the far right. We need to understand that it's not just black people's job to stand up for black people nor is it just gay people's job to stand up for gay people."

The major concern for most individuals is the NAP's social therapeutic viewpoint on homosexuality. In an article written by Mary Fridley, NAP's Director of the Bronx Institute for Social Therapy and Research and National Chairperson of NAP's Lesbian and Gay Caucus, entitled "Homophobia and the Rise of Neo-Fascism in the United States," it is stated "social-therapeutic practice understands homosexuality as rooted in the specific social conditions under which people live. Thus, homosexuality is a protest (whether conscious in the minds of individuals or not) against the organized repression and oppression of human beings." An interpretation of this statement by many lesbians and gay men is that one's

gayness is a lifestyle that could easily be changed if social conditions improved, thus making being lesbian or gay a diseased state of heterosexuality.

Weinstein believes that this is one of the ways the NAP's philosophy is misinterpreted. The position of the NAP, according to Weinstein, is that "if society were not so oppressive and repressive to gay people; which it is, in fact, there would be many, many more gay people. It's the repressiveness and oppression of the society that inhibits gay people from living our lives, from coming out."

The philosophy seems to imply that the social surroundings caused homosexuality, making gayness acquired rather than inherited. In defense, Weinstein stated that "I don't think we take a position that it's inherited: I don't think we take a position it's acquired. I think we take a position that it's a choice. A radical choice to do something different with one's life. It's a protest against the traditional roles that men and women are taught." Recalling the social movement of the 60's and 70's, Weinstein pointed out that people were coming out proudly and they didn't separate coming out, as people do today, from politics, but indeed it was a movement to refute the traditional societal roles placed on individuals. It's not a free personal choice to be gay, but it's a choice to come out since homosexuality in

America is not the disease, but homophobia. As Fulani noted in her keynote speech in Atlanta at the party's inception "...gayness is a protest against the inhumanity of social roles in a society that also says black folks aren't human - that we're niggers - and that gays are faggots, and that Jews are kikes...."

Weinstein understands that this is a controversial position to take, and that some lesbians and gay men disagree (as was evidenced when NAP was denied seating on the Steering Committee for the March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights for this position) and that "on one hand this important issue needs discussion, but on the other hand, to get bogged down over this and to overlook what we should be doing in protest of the far right's growth and brutality against lesbians and gay men is another issue."

To address lesbians and gay civil rights from the political platform, Weinstein stated the NAP is working to introduce an AIDS Bill of Rights to the Atlanta City Council and, hopefully, next year to the Georgia General Assembly. Many people have been receptive.

The other major issue of controversy is NAP's connection with Lyndon LaRouche who endorses quarantining PWA's and people with ARC. Weinstein pointed that if people would listen to what Fulani and the NAP are saying, people would know that there is no connection. "The NAP is pro-gay," she affirmed. Some individuals remember that Dr. Fred Newman, Executive Board member of NAP, and campaign manager for Fulani's Committee for Fair Elections, was a member of LaRouche's National Caucus of Labor Committee. Weinstein stressed that in 1974 LaRouche was considered to be left-wing by many individuals. Newman's association for two months in 1974 (five years before the NAP was formed) ended after evidence of neo-fascism.

In conclusion, it is evident from favorable media coverage by *Jet*, CNN, and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* that although there are controversial issues surrounding this party, many people are listening and supporting it. Since January 28, 1988, \$300,000 dollars has been contributed by 17,000 individuals, which has been matched by the federal government in support of Fulani's campaign for democracy and fair elections.

-Patricia A. Jackson

Number of Gay Cuban Detainees Questionable

The plight of the Cuban entrants from the "Freedom Flotilla" during the spring and summer of 1980 remains a sore point in the sullied reputation of the Reagan administration's Department of Justice. Administration officials are quick to defend any apparent injustices committed against the Marielitos, by reminding the American public that Cuban President Fidel Castro "dumped his prisons and mental hospitals into the boats, while soldiers pulled innocent refugees back to shore."

The number of gay men among the Marielitos has been a point of contention between all of the parties involved in the process of finding homes for the immigrants. Early estimates of the number of gay men involved in the boatlift range as high as 25 percent by national gay activists. That figure, however, has long been denounced by officials of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, who claim that such numbers are "inflated (and) irresponsible, (and) are further hindering efforts to find sponsors for the Cubans." Few lesbians ever identified themselves among the entrants, and none are now known to be detained.

The question of who among the Marielitos is gay revolves not around simple head-counts, but the basic terms gay and homosexual, which must clearly be redefined and set in the Latin American culture before the true numbers begin to emerge. The problem is further exacerbated by the deception of the Marielitos themselves. In their desperate attempt to flee Cuba, many confessed to homosexuality in order to be certified by the Cuban government and authorized to enter the port city of Mariel, where the exodus was taking place. Upon reaching the United States, many feared renouncing their confessed sexuality because they believed their Cuban records would follow them to the States.

Once in the American refugee camps, the Marielitos began to perform a variety of different religious beliefs and sexual morals for the various relief agencies in camp to interview and resettle entrants. According to psychiatrist Dr. Peter Valerio, until recently of the Public Health Service's National Institute of Mental Health, "When the Jewish relief agencies came into camp, suddenly there were thousands of Jews, when the Seventh Day Adventists were there, everyone was

Continued on Page 13

At Odds

At Odds is a regular feature describing public homophobic statements. Columnist, Peter Dakutis, responds.

We encourage you to add your support.

Jasper Dorsey, a columnist for *Neighbor Newspapers*, recently wrote a column entitled "Truth Not Changed by Euphemisms," which I read in the Feb. 10th issue of the *Northside Neighbor*. After bashing feminists, and affirmative action, Mr. Dorsey concluded his column with the following paragraph:

"Perhaps the euphemism which demands the most imagination is this one: Those who perform the unnatural acts of homosexual sodomy, sexual perversion, bestiality, and child molestation are, of all things, called: 'gay.'"

Dear Mr. Dorsey,

Have you ever been acquainted with gay people? I'm sure that you've known quite a few lesbians and gays in your life but our invisibility and pressures to stay invisible create problems. You might not have noticed that these are the same people you have admired and respected, people you've shared a laugh with, people you've borne sorrows with, people you're glad a part of your life are gay.

The question is: are you sincerely misinformed, or are you willfully blind? For in a recent column on euphemisms, you have viciously condemned us as a group for highly outrageous and insubstantial reasons. Are you listening to your own heart, your experiences and observations, or are you replaying mean-spirited messages programmed into your head?

You present as "truth" that homosexuality is unnatural and perverse. You are woefully out of line with the opinion of medical and mental health professionals, who maintain that homosexuality has existed throughout history and throughout all types and cultures.

I don't suggest what your motives are, Mr. Dorsey. I do believe, however, that in acting with those who would persecute a legitimate minority you are acting against common sense in perpetuating dishonest and inflammatory rhetoric.

Are you aware that data show that heterosexuals commit 95% of child molestation? If 10% of the population is homosexual, then gays not only molest children in much smaller numbers, but also in much smaller percentages. What are the sources for your charges of bestiality? Or are you making gross assumptions without any thought at all?

You might be right that "gay" is an odd word choice. No one is sure of its origin in this sense,

and certainly no one who chooses to be defined or is defined as mostly homosexual is necessarily happier than people who are mostly heterosexual.

People who define themselves as gay or lesbian communicate to society that they have pride and dignity, that they will not be mistreated by society for unwarranted reasons, and that they want others to know that they are humans who love and care and are defined by their own worth, not their sexual practices.

Wouldn't you feel the same way, Mr. Dorsey? I urge you to start looking at lesbians and gays carefully, honestly, and sincerely, instead of being led through hateful propaganda.

Sincerely yours,

Peter Dakutis

I am sending copies of this letter to Mr. Dorsey and to William Reynolds, Executive Editor of the *Northside Neighbor* at: 120 Copeland Road N.E. Atlanta Ga 30342. I will also send a copy to Otis A. Brumby Jr., Marietta Ga 30060.

You would be surprised at what a few letters could accomplish. Please take a few minutes, to clip the letter and fill out the information below. Send to Jasper Dorsey at the address listed above. I would also suggest that you speak to businesses that advertise in *Neighbor* newspapers. And heaven help us if there are lesbian and gay businesspeople who "silently" advertise in *Neighbor* newspapers and yet don't make their views known, even if "discreetly."

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

I agree with Mr. Dakutis and wish to register my complaint.

Different Entertaining; Lacks Depth

A critic I admire once wrote that he always felt badly when forced to comment adversely on young theater companies, or on plays written from minority points of view. He understood how badly we need them both, and how such companies invariably seem to take the greatest artistic and financial risks despite having the most to lose, including their very existence. I would like to ask the forbearance of readers to consider a mixed response to a production that, weaknesses accounted for, should not be missed. *Different* takes chances, has its rewards, and is worth our attention.

I went to see *Different* with a high degree of anticipation. The advance press had been promising: SAME's first musical would be a 21-song musical drama using elements of concert, cabaret and commentary to dramatize key passages in the life of a "gay Everyman." The story would follow Sonny Robinson from his lonely childhood, through his adult satisfactions and disappointments, to his eventual confrontation with AIDS.

The lights went down and an ensemble of attractive, high-energy actors/singers/dancers commanded the stage at once. The show itself is constructed in a familiar but pleasingly elliptical style. The plot is built around the lead character, Sonny, and the milieu through which he moves, which serves as material for some of the brightly written and beautifully performed songs we hear.

Some of this material is wittily, if superficially, on target: the humiliation certain children feel at being chosen last, if at all, for grade-school recess games; the discomfort of courtship rites played out in a parked car where one couple sits chastely in the front seat while waiting out the steamy goings-on behind them; and the friend who drops by emblazoned with news that he has met someone special who has left his full name and phone number on a matchbook for future reference.

Mostly we watch episodes depicting how Sonny lives his life. We follow him on his introduction to gay society and culture by his first visit to a bar (gateway to friends in order to construct gay social interaction outside the bar). And we're at his side when he meets Neal, a sympathetic and courtly bartender (also a frustrated writer) who eventually becomes his lover and housemate. In one of the production's finer moments, we watch them blithely fold clothes from a laundry basket, and sense there's nowhere else in the world they'd

rather be.

Different has been called "probably the most commercial project yet undertaken" by SAME, and perhaps that's part of the problem with it. I found it conventional, so concerned to be generically representational that it somehow becomes neutered. It's also a melodramatic piece of work, especially in Sonny's death scene and in Neal's scenes of grieving (poorly written by *Different*'s authors, Patrick Hutchinson and Dan Pruitt, and badly overacted, respectively, by David Willis and G. Burrow Holmes, neither of whom, when he's not dancing, knows what to do with his hands or how to move with ease onstage).

It's also a very WASPY view of gay life. And the result is a thin, distended series of songs and sketches, some brightly written and acted, but without much depth. It simply tells us nothing we don't already know about gays in American society and culture. If the production brings tears from some members of the audience, I'd guess the emotional baggage we all now bring into the theatre on account of lost loved ones is more likely the true source of those tears. We only need to be tapped lightly.

Any play that now addresses the topic of AIDS, in my view, risks being charged with pandering lest it tread with great care and delicacy; or the courage of an artist, one who is willing to face horror and the mystery of death head-on, and to evoke the holiness of last days when before us lies all the secrets to the universe or extinction everlasting.

In terms of addressing issues such as these, *Different* simply doesn't exist. But it does have the pleasures afforded by a cast who can sing and dance.

Standouts among the good, conviction-filled cast include Buddy Montgomery, whose voice seems to spin gold in the air; G. Scott Suprina, who underplays beautifully a married man who understands perfectly the risks he's taking by following his heart, and who, in his ensemble scenes, moves his wrists, hands, entire body, to witty comic effect; and Doug Lothes, who stops the show and struts away with it in his breast pocket in his matchbook number.

Different's lighting and sets were designed by John Williams; the score, an unusually good one, is by Patrick Hutchinson.

-Terry Francis

On The Way Up

Mountain Climbing in Sheridan Square, by Stan Leventhal, Edward-William Publishing, Austin, Texas, 1988: paperback \$8.95.

Not quite two decades have passed since the Stonewall Riot of 1969, a convenient starting date for the gay rights movement. Even this short time has seen tremendous change in the gay press, which has matured from a stage of newsletters, political tracts, vanity publications, and ephemeral literary journals. In the field of fiction writing, there is already a sense of a second generation, a new crop of names, producing a broader range of stories and novels.

Stan Leventhal belongs to this new breed. After some years of journalism, writing on music for the *New York Native*, he has just published his first novel, *Mountain Climbing in Sheridan Square*. Set in Manhattan, where Leventhal has lived for several years, the book takes as its central metaphor the tangled intersection of streets at the heart of Greenwich Village, where a statue of the Civil War General Philip Sheridan presides over a small park. The confusing geography of this part of the city, the influx of diverse people, and the relief provided by the few trees—all of this stands for a certain way of life. It is life in the big city, as lived by creative young people, some of whom are gay. A friend of mine, a young play director who holds body and soul together by typing, read the book in one gulp and exclaimed: "This is my life!"

As with most first novels, *Mountain Climbing* draws heavily from the author's own life. But Leventhal has omitted most of his childhood and school days. The time span covered is the past four years, fixing the novel firmly in the 1980's, the age of AIDS and Ronald Reagan. Leventhal has also abandoned

a straightforward narrative in favor of a non-linear series of short episodes. This technique, a bit hard to follow at first, allows him to juggle past and present, and to compare scenes simply by setting them side by side. The effect is like that of a film documentary, where we see real people, close up.

What holds the book together is the narrator's voice, consistent throughout. It is plain and unaffected, and popular, in the sense of coming from the people. It is so unobtrusive that it nearly disappears—an achievement for any writer, and a refreshing change from the self-conscious style of earlier gay writers, such as Andrew Holleran and Edmund White.

More substantial than his voice, though, is Leventhal's program. He has turned his back on the tradition of gay despair—the hopeless love affair, the hostile family, the sad suicide—and invented a new ideal. He shows us gay men in happy couples, who babysit their friends' children, and who work hard at their careers. They are middle class, but hardly "yuppies". They have learned the value of friendship. This is the keynote of the second generation in gay fiction: the integration of gay life back into the mainstream.

The character Amos represents the old way. From fun-loving New Orleans, Amos works as a waiter, cheats on his lover, does too much cocaine, and eventually fades from view. A hazard of dwelling solely in the here and now, of course, is an apparent lack of depth. Leventhal can't understand Amos, nor can he forgive him. Likewise, the death of another character, Lorenzo, is told so abruptly that it seems offhand.

Still, Leventhal deserves every chance for success, as does his publisher, Edward-William. The book is handsomely printed and bound, a tangible advance over earlier gay presses. Without question, Leventhal is on to something, and he may well climb to the top of his chosen mountain.

- Robert Boucheron

Picture Ourselves

A Lesbian Photo Album: The Lives of Seven Lesbian Feminists, by Cathy Cade, Waterwomen Books, 3022 Ashbrook Court, Oakland, California 94601. 1987: paperback \$14.95.

If you are a Lesbian who also calls herself a Feminist, this glossy "album" containing over 100 captioned photographs and strong text is for you. Cathy Cade has gathered up the friends of her friends and has produced an interesting assemblage of homey snapshots, pithy revelation from the women themselves and intimate photography. If you are a lesbian who does not care whether or not "feminist" follows her name and has enough to do just to keep herself alive, you may be put off by the price of this book and its strictly West Coast orientation. In any case, any woman who has the opportunity to contemplate the faces in the photographs and to savor the various flavors evoked by the women's words will inevitably leave enriched. I thought I knew what it was all about until I sat down with *A Lesbian Photo Album*.

Cade explains: "The photographs in this book are of two kinds: those supplied by the women...showing their lives from childhood to about 1980 and those we made together in 1980 to 1982. The pictures from our growing-up years were selected to tell our individual stories and also to depict the similarities and differences of our backgrounds."

Yes, Cade's "album" is indeed diverse, but I cringe at the worn out and weary device where "one of these" is chosen and then "one of those" — a Mexican woman, a physically-challenged woman, a big woman, a poor woman.... Nevertheless, I cannot deny that these intentional choices make the book as powerful and penetrating as it is. I welcome

the day when Feminist effort culminates in the visual variety among women becoming less of a spectacular issue than the unseen aspects of our minds and hearts.

The one distracting feature of *A Lesbian Photo Album* is the "historical introduction" by Lois R. Helmbold. Cade's introduction, which precedes Helmbold's, is quite effective in providing the impetus necessary to send the reader hungrily into the text. The perspective offered by Helmbold is five pages too long and seems to be yet another elitist indication that the words of "common" women simply could not stand alone without the interjection of a Feminist scholar. Though written well, the impersonal seven-page second introduction adds little to the intention or thrust of the book.

Overall, Cathy Cade has a good product. The arrangement of the photographs in addition to the skillfully edited interviews of the women are powerful. Cathy Cade has birthed a baby to be proud of.

- Terri L. Jewell

Death of a Legend



Los Angeles — Divine, pictured here in a 1983 performance at The Saint in Atlanta, died in his sleep in Los Angeles on March 7, 1988. Introduced as the "filthiest person alive" in the 1972 film *Pink Flamingos*, Divine, whose real name was Harris Glenn Milstead, most recently starred in *Hairspray*. The authorities are currently looking into the cause of death, which was temporarily identified as asphyxiation. Photo by Gerald Jones.

THE SOUTHERN VOICE CALENDAR



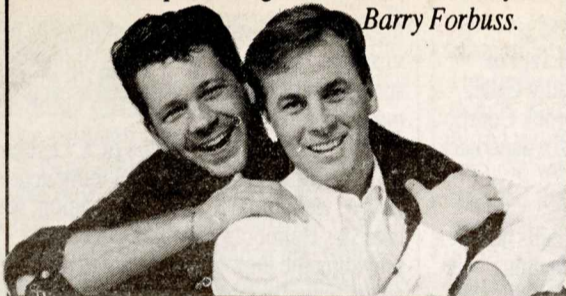
This Week's Highlights

- **SAME Presents-** March 16th. Seven Stages features an evening of pop/jazz music with the Angela Motter Band and special guest, DeDe Vogt, pictured at right. The songwriter/guitarist/bassist for the Paper Dolls makes a rare solo appearance. Call 584-2104 for details & reservations.
- **Different Benefit for NAPWA-** March 15th. All proceeds for this special production of the musical, Different, will go to the Atlanta Chapter of the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA). Come out tonight and help support Atlanta's PWA's. 8:00 PM. Seven Stages Theater. Tickets \$10 at Charis Books and the door.
- **Steel Magnolias-** This new Southern Comedy by Robert Harling relates the Saturday morning rituals of a quartet of customers who gather for "good hair, gossip and friendship" at a Louisiana Beauty Salon. Runs now through April 9th at the Alliance Mainstage. The March 18th performance will offer a specially equipped seating section for visually impaired patrons. 892-2414.
- **AIDS Special-** WVEU-TV, Channel 69. Two hours of AIDS information and discussion. 8-10 PM, March 21st. The Panel will include Sandra McDonald of Outreach, Inc., Wayne Nidifer of AID Atlanta and others.

TUESDAY

15 • "Running Diana"- 8 Women Artists presents new works by Lisa Tuttle. Seven Stages lobby, March 9 thru April 2.

- Caroline Aiken- Little 5 Points Pub, 10 PM
- NAPWA Benefit- at Seven Stages. "Different", 8:00 PM. All proceeds go to NAPWA. Photo by Barry Forbuss.



22 • Politically Incorrect Theatre - tonight and tomorrow at Seven Stages, 8:00 PM. 584-2104

WEDNESDAY

16 • Pop/Jazz Music at Seven Stages featuring the Angela Motter Band with special guest DeDe Vogt. 8 PM. 584-2104.



RUNNING DIANA

23

- ELGO meets at Emory University, 7:00 PM. 727-6692

THURSDAY

17 • Renee Brachfeld- Juggling Storyteller, 7:30, Charis Books & More. • EEK-A-MOUSE and Vault Series VI- Club Rio

- Delbert McClinton at Center Stage Theater, 9 PM.
- NAPWA hosts St. Patrick's Day Party. 874-7926

St. PATRICK'S DAY- Get Green!

24 • Validating Our Intuitive Experiences- a women-only evening at Charis Books & More.

FRIDAY

18 • Different- Thursday th

- PLUS Gr every Frida
- Congregation Bet Hav PM, Quaker House.

25 • Bingo Fund Southeastern Friends Atlant

- Deidre McC women, with Beth York. at the First Existentialist at Charis Books & More Photo by Irene Young.

SOUTHERN VOICE

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
see page 15

The Atlanta March Committee
More than a phase...

NEXT MEETING: MARCH 22nd

7:30PM-Highland Branch Library

377-8312

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242-2021



Inner Harmony for Stressful Times

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Page 14

Different
A Benefit for the Atlanta Chapter of NAPWA

Tuesday, March 15th
8:00 PM at Seven Stages
\$10 at the door

SUPPORT OUR PWA'S

Next Week's Highlights

- **Deidre McCalla in concert**- Olivia Records recording artist, Deidre McCalla, will be appearing for Atlanta women on March 25th. Deidre is an evocative performer with a wicked sense of humor and a rock-solid back beat! Beth York will be opening the concert which will begin at 8:00 PM at the First Existentialist Church, 470 Candler Park Dr., NE. Tickets \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door, available at Charis Books & More.
 - **BINGO**- Friends Atlanta is sponsoring the Bingo fundraiser for the Southeastern Conference at the Atlanta Waterworks, Howell Mill and Reservoir Drive, March 25th at 7:30 PM. Call 634-2500 for more information. Don't miss this fantastic evening of prizes and surprises!
 - **Ships**- Atlanta playwright Bill Bagwell premieres his love story which examines the effects of the AIDS epidemic and the choices people are making about control and quality of their lives. The play runs March 26-30 at Seven Stages Collective Theatre, 1105 Euclid Avenue. Call 584-2104 for reservations.
 - **Validating Our Intuitive Experiences**- Delores Liston, a feminist teacher and healer, will discuss crystals, healing stones, the Tarot, and other methods for us to validate our intuitive experiences. There will also be a short guided meditation. This women-only evening is being presented at Charis Books & More, 419 Moreland Ave., NE, at 7:30 PM on March 24th.

SATURDAY

- 19**
- **Hotlanta Softball League Spring Invitational** today and tomorrow at the Southside Recreational Center on Jonesboro Rd.
 - **Free Income Tax Preparation Assistance**- Atlanta Gay Center, 1:00- 5:00 PM, Saturdays until April.

SUNDAY

- 20**
- **The Angela Motter Band** plays at Little 5 Points Pub. 9:30 PM.
 - **LIFE: (Lesbians In Fun Endeavors)** Bowling and Brunch 493-3966
 - **Circle of Healing** at the First Existentialist Church, 3:45- 5:30 PM.

MONDAY

- 21**
- **Michelle Martin, Simone and DeDe Vogt** Little 5 Points Pub 10 PM.
 - **LEGAL**- 7:30 PM, Peachtree St. Branch Library.

The First Day of Spring

- 26**
- **Final Performance, Juno and the Paycock** presented by Theatre Gael at Emory University, 8 PM. 727-6187
 - **Ships** premieres at Seven Stages, 5:30 PM. 584-2104
 - **AIDS Awareness Weekend Workshop**, AID Atlanta. 872-0600

- 27**
- **LIFE: Yellow River Wildlife Game Ranch and Lunch**. 493-3966
 - **Angela Motter Band** plays at Little 5 Points Pub, 9:30 PM.

28

- **Michelle Martin, Simone, and DeDe Vogt**, Little 5 Points Pub, 10 PM
- **Ships** at Seven Stages, 8 PM. 584-2104 *Photo by Barry Forbuss.*

PALM SUNDAY



S.A.M.E.
Southeastern Arts, Media
& Education Project, Inc.

THE NAMES PROJECT

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May 29th & 30th

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Join Friends Atlanta
for
DIFFERENT
Sunday, March 31
8:00 PM
Seven Stages

Ticket Info:
634-2500

ORGANIZATIONS

Registry

AALGA- African-American Lesbian/Gay Alliance. 1st Sunday of each month. 4:00 PM. Quaker House. 525-3376. A political and social organization for black lesbians and gay men.

ACT- Atlanta Couples Together. Meeting times vary. 432-1085. A social support and educational outreach.

AFC- Atlanta Faerie Circle. 1st Sunday of each month. Location and time varies. 622-4112. Gay men who gather to support one another and explore their connections with the earth and white light.

AGC- Atlanta Gay Center. 876-5372. Provides services and advocacy for the lesbian and gay community. Operated primarily by volunteers, AGC offers numerous services for lesbians and gay men as well as educational outreach to society as a whole. AGC Help Line-892-0061. Information, counseling and referrals.

AGMC- Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus. 296-6581. A semi-professional community oriented chorus of male voices. Membership open to all interested singers and non-singers alike.

AMC- Atlanta March Committee. 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. 7:30 PM. North Highland Branch Library. 377-8312. A community-based activist organization that works toward promoting lesbian and gay rights through educational, social, cultural, and political events.

AVS- Atlanta Venture Sports. Activities and meetings vary. 242-4899. An association in which the membership enjoys recreational, social, educational and sports activities.

BWMT- Black and White Men Together. 1st Saturday of each month. 8:00 PM. Location varies. 794-BWMT. A gay inter-racial organization committed to fostering a supportive environment wherein racial and cultural barriers can be overcome and the goal of human equality realized.

Circle of Healing- 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month. 4:00 PM. First Existentialist Church. The Circle is open to anyone in need of healing, be it physical, emotional, or spiritual.

Friends Atlanta- Activities and meetings vary. 634-2500. A social, recreational and educational group for gays and lesbians. Volleyball, bowling, dinners, theater nights and dances are among the activities.

GALA- Gay Atheists of America. Meetings social in nature and at members' discretion. 875-8877. To assure freedom of speech; freedom from religion; to defend the separation of church and state; to assist in obtaining civil rights for gays and lesbians, and to offer non-believers an alternate social scene.

GAPAC- Greater Atlanta Political Awareness Coalition. Meetings vary. 888-0510. The gay and lesbian political action committee monitoring and acting in the local political scene.

GLPCI- Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International. 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month. 7:30 PM. Unitarian Universalist Church. 296-8369. A support group for lesbians and gay parents.

The Group- Thursday nights. Call the Gay Help Line at 892-0061 or write PO Box 15191, Atlanta, Ga. 30333. A support group for gay and bisexual men who are or who have been involved in marital-type situations with women.

Integrity- Gay Caucus of the Episcopal Church. 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month. 7:30 PM. All Saints Episcopal Church-3rd floor of Ellis Hall.

LIFE- Lesbians in Fun Endeavors. Meeting times and locations vary. 493-3966. Bringing professional gay women together for the fun of it, giving them the opportunity to make friends and enjoy a wide variety of events.

LEGAL- Legislate Equality for Gays and Lesbians. 3rd Monday of each month. 7:00 PM. Peachtree Branch Library. 875-7500. The voice of lesbian and gay Georgians in the Democratic party.

MACGLO- Metro Atlanta Council of Gay and Lesbian Organizations. 3rd Thursday of each month. 7:00 PM. Peachtree Branch Library. 633-4754. A representative council of lesbian and gay organizations to facilitate the exchange of information.

NAPWA- Atlanta Chapter of the National Association of People with AIDS. 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. 7:00 PM. 1132 W. Peachtree St. 874-7926. A political, social, and educational organization which exists to confront the AIDS crisis. Membership is open to all individuals with AIDS or AIDS-Related Complex.

PLGC- Presbyterians for Lesbian and Gay Concerns/More Light. 1st Sunday of each month. 373-5830. Gays and lesbians gather over light foods to celebrate their Presbyterian heritage.

SAME- Southeastern Arts, Media & Education Project, Inc. 584-2104. Organized to utilize the arts and media as tools for exploration, education, and change in human rights, especially those pertaining to the lesbian and gay community.

SECLGM- Southeastern Conference for Lesbians and Gay Men. Every Monday. 7:00 PM. Peachtree Branch Library. Volunteers needed to plan the Southeastern Conference to be held in April, 1988.

WOW- Women of Wisdom. 3rd Monday of each month. 7:45 PM. North Highland Branch Library. Aims to facilitate women meeting together with older women in a pleasant atmosphere. Offers timely programs of interest to the community, reaches out to older women and women with special needs.

Kurt Rahn Bargains For A Longer Life

For several months I have known and watched Kurt Rahn work. I have seen him at meetings, watched him at the NAPWA (National Association of People With AIDS) office, talking to clients, making buttons for demonstrations, returning lists of phone calls, laughing and talking to AID Atlanta personnel. Kurt looks comfortable, at ease with his role, like someone who has been doing this kind of political and service-oriented work for years. He has not.

On New Year's Day 1987, Kurt got sick. He was running a fever and his leg was swollen and hurting. He was beginning a new job and had no insurance and little money so he took aspirin for his fever and went back to bed. Several days later his leg was more swollen and his fever was higher. He knew he had to have medical help. Kurt went to Grady Hospital where he understood that he would not be refused for treatment because of lack of money and insurance. The Doctors at Grady diagnosed Kurt's problem and placed him on antibiotics. In the course of examination, they also did blood work. Kurt was sitting in the emergency room when one doctor asked another where the "poor slob with the screwed up bloodwork was." The doctor was looking for Kurt. That moment began the realization for Kurt that something was seriously wrong. He was admitted to the hospital but there was no bed for him so he lay in the hall until morning when a bed could be found. Minutes after he had settled into his room and breakfast came, the doctors entered the room and told Kurt that he had tested HTLV-III positive and that they needed to do a pelvic tap. Kurt wanted to eat breakfast first. He was tired from his sleepless night and hungry. There was no time for rest or food. The pelvic tap is done without anesthesia and Kurt spent his early morning screaming into his pillow. During the recovery period, dosed with Demerol, Kurt called his mother to explain what was going on. His Mother already knew her son was gay. She knew about AIDS. She would try to understand, to cope.

After release from the hospital, Kurt went back to worrying about making rent, paying bills, attending classes, day-to-day real life. He didn't try to deal with or understand what was going on in his body. Kurt calls this the denial phase of his illness. Friends covered for him at work when management asked if he had AIDS. His body was not cooperating with the denial. Kurt had chemotherapy and the blood work improved for a while, then became worse again. The doctors at Grady decided that Kurt needed to have his spleen removed. The surgery required months of recovery. It became apparent to Kurt that he would have to manage his health for the rest of his life. He was diagnosed with a severe form of AIDS-Related Complex (ARC). The time and opportunity for denial was over.

Kurt had practiced denial in various phases of his life. As a teenager, he kept trying to deny his sexual inclinations by dating women, even though he didn't find them sexually satisfying. Kurt was a technician for road shows for big rock and roll name artists until the oil crisis and bands stopped doing the huge road shows. Kurt moved to Atlanta to get away from the small Alabama town where he had grown up. Part of the reason for moving was to explore his sexuality and Atlanta offered the opportunities. The denial of the gayness ended when Kurt moved in with a male lover. Then Kurt took a job as bartender at The Cove. He lived happily in a primarily gay world, dealing with only a few straight delivery workers from the liquor companies. Kurt had found his home, a place to be comfortable. In order to work the long hours, staying up all night, having trouble sleeping during the day, Kurt started using speed. He entered another denial phase, telling himself that using the drugs and no sleep wasn't a problem. And, again, his body reacted, forcing him to deal with the denial.

Leaving The Cove and realizing that he did have a drug problem, Kurt made a total turn around in his life. He started back to

college at Georgia State and got a job in a good restaurant. He was determined to make something of his life, to realize some of the potential and intelligence that he had allowed to go unused for a long time. He began working out at the gym, getting his body and mind in shape. The ARC diagnosis and the spleen operation came during this period and totally rearranged Kurt's newly organized life.

While recovering from the spleen operation, Kurt understood even more clearly that managing his health would be something that he had to do for the rest of his life. He returned to work and slipped into a pattern of sleeping, working, washing a shirt out in the sink and sleeping again. His classes were floundering. His energy was decreasing. He had to struggle just to keep working. His doctors suggested that he apply for social security insurance. After intense deliberation, Kurt made the decision to join the ranks of the retired. Kurt was 28 years old.

During the first period at home, Kurt hibernated, caring for his plants, repainting the apartment, resting. He was on the mailing list from AID Atlanta and decided to go to a support group meeting. He was afraid to talk about what was going on inside him. He tested the water a little by telling close friends and had good experiences with them. Encouraged by this, he started going to the support groups and quickly realized there was a great need for people to speak out about the disease from the first person. Kurt became involved in the AIDS education programs. He participated in the panel for the training program for volunteers at AID Atlanta. He applied to participate in the Fifth Annual AIDS Forum and met people from NAPWA. He became an alternate board member for the national organization. He returned to Atlanta and talked about starting an Atlanta chapter of NAPWA. On Memorial Day, 1987, NAPWA officially

Continued on Page 16

Making Room

Spiritual Alternatives for Lesbians and Gays

I can think of no one I know in the lesbian/gay community who has not been at odds with the religious tradition of their youth. I'm sure that that doesn't mean that such a case or cases don't exist, but I have yet to find one. What I mean by at odds is rejection of positive lesbian/gay identity by any or all of the following: clergy, congregation or structure (local, regional or national).

In the midst of this vacuum we have created our own spaces for religious and spiritual expression and engaged different traditions in dialogue. We have started new churches, looked to alternative traditions, and created organizations that remain in dialogue with mainline religious organizations. In the course of this and the next column or two, I will describe the organizations and supply contact information.

Organizations emerging within mainline traditions have gained status and a voice (though not often heeded). Among these organizations are Integrity (Episcopal), Presbyterians for Lesbians and Gay Concerned and Bet Haverim (Jewish).

Bet Haverim started out about eight years ago and began as a social group for Jewish lesbians and gay men, rather than a religious or spiritual group. The group lost its momentum and many members fell away until about three and a half years ago when the men began meeting, focusing on religion, and creating a space inclusive of lesbians and gay men. The first two years of meeting as a congregation involved more men than women. This year, however, Bet Haverim has an equal number of man and women. The congregation is supported by about seventy members who now have a place to celebrate their Judaism from a place of being lesbian and gay.

Members reflect the spectrum of Jewish experience, from Orthodox to Reform to the

Continued on Page 13

As the (Lesbian) World Turns

They are quarreling bitterly: their relationship is falling apart; they're not even sure they want to stay together. Unknown to them, but visible to the television viewer, the teenage daughter overhears their quarrel. Knowing she is partially responsible for their problems, she rushes out the door, sobbing...

In the waiting room, the receptionist greets a new client; another is already there, reading a magazine. The two catch each other's eye, and fraught, sleazy music wells up in the background. They continue eyeing each other, and the receptionist picks up the vibes. She knows, as do we, that this chance encounter is going to turn into a heavy and dangerous romance...

Perfect soap-opera scenes - you could be watching an episode of *The Guiding Light* or *One Life to Live* - except that all the characters are women. For this is the world's first lesbian soap opera. *Two in Twenty* ("because one in ten sounds lonely") is the brainchild of Laurel Chiten. It started three years ago: Chiten, interning at a local TV station and feeling bored and powerless, made a casual remark to an acquaintance, Cheryl Qamar, about wanting to make a lesbian soap opera. Qamar took the idea seriously, mentioned it to several other people, and a month later, a woman who worked at a cable network called Chiten and asked her if she was serious about the soap. Chiten decided she was.

But how do you go about making a lesbian soap opera? Chiten didn't know. "A lot of people start a project knowing exactly what they want to do, and they write a proposal and get some money, and then they find the people to work with," she remarks with a laugh. Chiten, on the other hand, just started calling people. "It's like when you suddenly realize you have a night free and you want to do something, so you go through your phone book calling everyone you know." She pulled together a meeting of four women; the next week there were ten, and the next week thirty - including Qamar, who eventually became associate producer. "I wanted a co-producer," says Chiten wryly, "but nobody would do it. Finally Cheryl agreed to be associate producer. That means I get all the headaches, and she just gets some of them."

In the beginning they knew three things: they wanted to write a lesbian soap opera, they would be able to use public-access equipment because Chiten was a member of Somerville Community Access TV, and they wanted a traditional hierarchy, not a collective, because it would be more efficient.

Why a soap opera? Why not a documentary or a serious drama? Chiten herself was a soap-opera fan; she had reluctantly acquiesced to a lover's addiction to *General Hospital* and had become hooked herself; she knew and respected the power of the form. Qamar wasn't a soap fan,



but she recognized the uses of the genre. It had the ability to present people's lives in an ongoing, open-ended fashion rather than a contained, neatly tied-up package of one or two hours. It was a form that, if staunchly heterosexual, had been from its beginnings woman-centered - a form created for an audience of women, and representing female values and sensibilities. And it was fun. "So many things done about lesbians and gay men are so serious," she says. "That's important, but we also need lighter things; we need to celebrate our lives." Adds Chiten, "I believe in entertainment."

Chiten also believes in using the material available to the best advantage, and the material available was videotape, not film. "If I tried to do something that looked like a movie, it would look schlocky on videotape," she says. "Even sitcoms and nighttime soaps are shot on film. Soaps are shot on video; they're quick, and there's a certain technique that's not so slick that soaps use. I knew we could do it."

They were also very clear about their intended audience - this was to be a work for and about lesbians. "It's fine if straight people watch it," says Chiten, "but it's not written for them. We're not trying to convince them that lesbians are really wonderful people, and we're not watering anything down for them. This is about the way life is lived in the lesbian community that we know; it's saying that this is what our little subculture is; this is what our life is like. Lesbians are almost always invisible in the media, and when they show up at all, it's in something like *Personal Best* where she ends up with a man."

To get a sense of how to make a soap, Chiten went to New York, where she had some contacts in television, and was able to attend rehearsals of several soaps there and to meet and talk with people involved with them.

When she came back, she and the other writers (six in the beginning, then four), mapped

out a list of characters and themes they wanted for their soap. They went through a list of all the issues they wanted included in their storylines: AIDS, racism, lesbian custody, sexism, discrimination against the disabled. Then they listed the main characters they wanted. "They were basically stock characters; we wanted it to be loose enough that we could adapt the character to the actor who played her." They put ads for auditions in local papers and were stunned when over 100 women came to try out for the roles. The result is a multiracial cast of talented stage actors, most of whom had never before worked on TV. They also assembled a complete crew of volunteers.

In true soap opera form, the show revolves around two households central in mythical community of the soap, but, of course, the households are not the extended biological families of mainstream soapland, but lesbians living in various roommate-lover combinations. One household is composed of Lee, the Jewish mother of a confused and rebellious teenage daughter; Lee's lover Niki, a therapist; the daughter Charley; Sharon, a medical student; and Luna, a separatist astrologer. In the other household, MJ, an aspiring rock musician lives with her young roommate, the "baby dyke" Helene. MJ calls herself "trysexual" - "I'll try anything." She is at work on a rock video (which is shown, complete with an original rhythm and blues song, in one episode. Helene is struggling with coming out to her mother; Sharon, as a med student, is facing the pain of working with an AIDS patient; and Lee is caught up in a custody suit with her ex-husband.

Sound melodramatic? Yes. Sound like real life? Yes again. Chiten and Qamar have an understanding most people who do takeoffs on soaps don't share, they know that soaps exaggerate, but also *reflect*, real life, and that the reflection of reality is as much a part of the soaps' appeal as the escape from it. The result is that, at least in the pieces I was able to see in

their 20-minute promopiece, they've created a genuine soap ambience combined with a genuine depiction of life in a lesbian community.

If they don't make fun of soaps, however, they do make fun of commercials and news promos. They've created a line of funny products advertised by campy lesbians and gay men. They have a wonderful newsbreak; a perfectly tailored anchorwoman blandly announces that "the world is on fire; more after this," followed by the inevitable, cheery commercial. And there's an absolutely wonderful mock PSA, in which a dental hygienist earnestly begs viewers to use dental floss, because the law requires her to report any signs of pubic hair in her patient's teeth. (There's also one serious PSA for a program called "Buddies" designed to create support for people with AIDS.)

Though it's good fun, *Two in Twenty* is also good politics. "I didn't put three years of my life into this just so people will have a nice evening and go home and forget about it," says Chiten. She and Qamar want other people to see it, to realize it can be done, and to take the idea further, to make these depictions of lesbian life more available to lesbians. And, when they're encouraged to pipedream, they admit they'd like to influence mainstream soap operas, so that gay and lesbian characters will find their way into Pine Valley and Port Charles.

Meanwhile, they're gratified that they've been able to complete *Two in Twenty* and gratified by the support they've gotten. "Debbi Grannik, our production assistant; our writers; a woman and two men who donated \$7000 worth of work putting captions for the hearing-impaired on the videos." They were also helped by grants from the Mass. Council on Arts and Humanities and the Astrea Corporation in New York, as well as by individual contributions from all around the country. The money and time contributed made it possible to continue on a practical level; the support behind the contributions made it emotionally possible.

With the project completed, Chiten, Qamar, and their associates look forward to resuming their normal lives. "People don't realize how much work goes into a few hours of video," Qamar says. "One ten-minute scene can represent 20 hours of work and 30 people's energy."

But it's work they're glad they did, and they look forward to its being seen in cities around the country, and to spawning future efforts by other lesbian video- and filmmakers. And why not? There are twelve network soap operas portraying the lives and fantasies of heterosexual America: there's plenty of room for more soaps portraying the lives and fantasies of lesbians and gay men. And judging from the response to *Two in Twenty* so far, there's energy to do it.

-Karen Lindsey

Author's note: To buy or rent copies of *Two in Twenty* call (617) 625-7882, or write *Two in Twenty*, PO Box 105, Somerville, MA 02144. (Reprinted with permission from *Sojourner: The Women's Forum*, Feb. 1988)

SPORTS

Hotlanta Volleyball: Of Legs and Pheromones

I think, possibly, it might have been Harvey Milk who once said, "Those who can, do. Those who can't, report on it." Thus it was, constant readers and fellow sports fans, that this roving reporter found himself at the weekly Hotlanta Volleyball League games, Friday night, March 4, at 774 Virginia Avenue.

Since this is my first on-the-job sports event, I arrive a little early to get the feel of the place, to get a sense of the teamship and competitiveness between players before the games begin. Well, if you didn't know, the games are played inside a gymnasium, and folks, this was my first major *deja vu* of the evening. It's been I can't remember when since I've been inside a gym, but there are some

things you just can't ever forget. That smell. The gym smell. I swear, some industrial supply company must have this stuff in aerosol cans somewhere that janitors all over the world spray inside gyms before anyone shows up. It's too universal.

Anyway, there are already a bunch of people milling around, talking, stretching, volleying about, and my second major impression is (hey, I'm only human) legs. All kinds and sorts of legs. Lots of legs. Long legs, short legs, hairy legs, smooth legs, even cast legs. No lie, there was one player there with a leg cast that went from toe to crotch. Oh, what we'll suffer in the name of sports. But hey, I'm on assignment here. Look, team t-shirts! Hotlanta Volleyball fits everyone up in a nice long-sleeve jersey upon the front of which is the state of Georgia with an HVA volleyball net waving across it. Kelley green numbers above an embossed volleyball highlight the chest area, the same numbers being repeated on the back of the shirt, and some exceptional detailing down the left sleeve. Nice look, guys and gals. I'm ready for some net action!

7:00 p.m., the whistle blows. All players

must pay up and be in uniform. There is a brief meeting before play begins (and I'm hoping they don't have an official volleyball prayer that I've never heard) where announcements are made and people generally "psyche up" for the action. Finally, we're ready to start.

Two courts are used for two simultaneous games per match, and it works something like this. Each match is the best two of three games, with the third game played only if necessary. Each game's score will begin at 4-4 once both teams field at least five players and list their numbers on the lineup sheets. Games are played to fifteen points by either team, as long as the winning margin is at least two points. During the third game, teams will change courts once either team reaches a score of ten points. Ya'll with me?

Now, there are eight teams playing four matches, so before the night is over, each team will have played two matches. Who plays who in which match is decided before the start of the game; in fact, on the sheet I was handed, it's already decided through the end of April. But who initially gets which side of the court is decided by the good old tried-and-true made in America proverbial "coin toss". (Although I

never once actually saw a coin being tossed, I was assured this was how it was done.)

The first match pits Burkhart's Pub against The Armory on Court 1 and Deana's One Mo' Time against Crazy Rayz in Court 2. Once again, I am struck by the variety of people that are here; short, tall, young, not so young, male, female, black, white, probably even rich, poor, but who can tell in those jerseys? And nothing matters but the sport and the sportsmanship, playing with others of the same bent, and even if I can't assume that everyone here is gay, at least they've got to be sympathetic, right? Heady stuff.

Playing is tough and serious, especially in Match 2 when Backstreet and Renegades spar off. The volleying is high (we're talking ceiling scrapers in some instances) and the hitting is hard. (There's nothing like the sound of a serve; a good, solid, healthy sound.) Lots of yelling, lots of clapping and high-fiving.

Now, I'd like to mention a little bit about the pheromone theory in passing. It is speculated that the reason sports events get so violent, even in the stands, is that, when you get that

Continued on Page 14

Living With AIDS

"It's been a positive influence in my life in many ways. I've made a lot of changes since I was diagnosed with AIDS-Related Complex."

The guy sitting across from me in support group offered his comments with sincerity and conviction.

"Positive influence?"

I had a rather overwhelming urge to get up from my seat, cross the room and strangle him. The past few days of my life had been hell and this guy's having a "positive experience."

It had begun a year or so earlier with vague symptoms and a "definitive" diagnosis of Persistent Generalized Lymphadenopathy, "probably" associated with HTLV-III infection. I could handle that, I couldn't see or feel my enlarged lymph nodes so it was easy enough to ignore them. It wasn't as easy to ignore the white spotting on my tongue or my sore throat caused by the thrush that had developed the previous week. A couple of days later I awoke to find one side of my face paralyzed. My previous effective denial mechanism wasn't working this time; this was difficult to ignore.

"Your T-helper count is low, the ratio to T-suppressors is abnormal. You have AIDS-Related Complex. We will need to do a spinal tap and a CAT scan to rule out a brain infection or tumor."

I wondered whether the "we" meant the physician was also going to partake in a spinal tap and brain scan. Anger was beginning to work more effectively than my rapidly fading denial. The afternoon before I journeyed to support group my year-long assignment as a "buddy" ended when his mother phoned.

"He cared about you a great deal. He died peacefully in his sleep."

I nervously sat in support group, wondering what I was doing in this room of strangers. My

friends and family had always been supportive and they could help me through this. The discussion shifted to macrobiotics, Isoprinosine and positive imaging. I wanted to suggest crystal balls and voodoo, feeling particularly skeptical. As my turn approached to speak, I had a strong urge to run from the room. My life was out of control, my coping mechanisms weren't working this time, and nothing anyone here could say or do could help me tonight. More talk about the "positives", the good things that can develop from a diagnosis and a sinking feeling that I had made a big mistake by coming to this group.

I stumbled through the words describing the past few days, the impending diagnostic tests and expertly avoided discussion of the overwhelming emotions of fear and helplessness I was feeling. As I finished, the guy who had earlier talked about the positive changes in his life looked at me with the same sense of concern and conviction.

"You must be very afraid and confused and feeling very alone in this. I've been there and I want to help you."

The gentle voice of the group facilitator assured me that it was okay to be afraid. The person next to me gently squeezed and held my hand. And I cried for the first time in years.

I learned how to live with ARC in the weeks to follow through their support. The bonds and friendships that have developed since that night two years ago remain nurturing and strong. The quality of relationships in my life has taken on greater importance. I find myself more open to new ideas and innovative treatments, and accept the impact of one's spiritual health on physical health. The every day stresses in life seem more insignificant and I tend to appreciate each day for its uniqueness. It's not okay anymore to accept things as they are if it's possible to change and improve them.

And having ARC *has* been a positive influence in my life in many ways. Now, when I encounter the newly-diagnosed, I wonder if they have that same urge to strangle me. Probably so.

Updates

MARTA Gives PWA's Free Half-Fare Cards

The Office of Community Affairs of MARTA, as a public service, is now making half-fare cards available through AID Atlanta to clients who are PWA's with medically certified disability and, in some cases, also to PWARC's. The half-fare card is good for one year. Using it allows bus and train riders to travel at half of the full fare for each ride.

New clients at AID Atlanta are being informed during intake that they must be medically certified as disabled to qualify. Those who are already clients of the agency may need to be certified in order to qualify, and should check with their case worker before applying for the half-fare card.

If you are already qualified, call Social Services at 874-6517 and ask for MARTA Care Service.

March Committee & ACT NOW Plan AIDS Action '88

Atlanta - The Atlanta March Committee will be coordinating events around the Spring AIDS Action '88 in cooperation with ACT NOW (the AIDS Coalition to Network, Organize and Win). Beginning on April 29, and continuing through May 7, AIDS activists from San Diego to Atlanta will stage nine consecutive days of events focused on the following issues:

- Friday, April 29
AIDS and Homophobia
- Saturday, April 30
PWAs - Care and Uncaring
- Sunday, May 1
AIDS in the Ghetto, Barrio and on the Reservation
- Monday, May 2
AIDS on Campus
- Tuesday, May 3
AIDS behind Bars
- Wednesday, May 4
Women and the AIDS Crisis
- Thursday, May 5
AIDS, a World-wide Crisis
- Friday, May 6
Life Withheld and Held Back

- Saturday, May 7
A National Day of Protest.

If you or an organization that you are affiliated with would like to work on one of the day's events, please attend the next Atlanta March Committee meeting on March 22 at 7:30 P.M. at the Highland Branch Library on the corner of North Highland and St. Charles Avenues. The Atlanta March Committee will be coordinating the May 6 and 7 events and can use help to make the impact felt around the state. We are looking at a 24-hour public demonstration beginning at noon on Friday, and culminating with a rally at noon on Saturday. This will be Atlanta's chance to say "How long!" (remember Whoopi?) to Joe Frank Harris.

For more information, call Cathy Woolard at 377-8312.

New NAPWA Office Hours and Services

Atlanta NAPWA now has regular office hours. They are Monday through Friday, noon to five. We are now offering an information and referral service for PWA's and PWARC's and others involved. If you have any questions concerning medical treatments, drug protocols, legal issues, wills, living wills, insurance, political concerns- anything to do with AIDS- give us a call. If we don't have the information we will research it for you. Also, let us know if you are having problems with discrimination or treatment providers. We will do what we can to help- but we can't help unless you let us know.

We will also be doing job referrals. We often hear from people who are willing to hire PWA's for part-time positions. Let us know if you are looking for work, or are an employer willing to give a PWA a job.

Australians To Be Tested Before Surgery

Sidney--Doctors in a major Australian hospital have voted to test all emergency surgery patients for the AIDS virus before performing the operations.

The surgeons at Sydney's Royal

North Shore Hospital said their decision was made with the intention of protecting medical personnel from infection, and stressed they have no intention of denying treatment to anyone, regardless of test results. If a patient tests positive, they will take extra precautions such as wearing glasses and two sets of gloves before treating them.

The spokesperson for the doctors admitted the risk of contracting the disease by performing medical procedures is not high, but it does exist, and there is concern among the surgeons and surgical nurses.

Non-emergency surgery patients are already tested for the HIV virus.

Since AIDS was first detected there in 1983, almost 400 people have died from the virus in Australia.

AIDS Art Action

SAME's AIDS Art Action Project is an opportunity for visual and literary artists from the Atlanta community to work with PWA's to create a kind of a personal statement for each PWA. Volunteer artists work with interested PWA's on a one-on-one basis to make something which will serve as a lasting statement about that person's life. At the end of the year, an exhibit and reading of the works produced will be held to celebrate and affirm those individuals who have worked together to produce artworks. This will also be an opportunity for the community- at-large to view the human aspects of AIDS, and to experience first-hand through the hearts and minds of those affected by this disease.

This program will provide an important opportunity for many PWA's to make comments to the world about who they are and where they have been, giving a sense of meaning to their own lives. Also, the therapeutic benefits of utilizing an individual's creativity have long been documented and proven.

Ever since SAME came into existence, we have been striving to create a network of artists and writers throughout Atlanta. We often hear from these people a strong desire to do something about the current health crisis, and a feeling of helplessness and frustration because they feel that there is little that they can do. The AIDS Art Action Project provides an opportunity for them to get involved

in a way that utilizes their talents and their caring.

Using existing organizations such as Aid Atlanta and NAPWA, SAME hopes to bring together our network of artists and writers with those PWA's who are seeking creative outlets for expression. Working as a team to develop a project each artist and PWA will choose a medium that best expresses that PWA's needs. The final project may be a poem or a story, a painting, collage, quilt, sculpture, or a series of photographs.

This program will begin in March of 1988 and go through February of 1989. Some time in mid January, a showing of all the works produced will be held in a local art gallery. At the end of the showing all works will be returned to the PWA's or their families.

For more information, please call Stebbo Hill at SAME, 584-2104.

PWA Dinners at the Shrine

Each Tuesday night the Shrine is the place to be. The dinner for PWA's continues to be a complete success. In addition to terrific meals provided at no charge by a cheerful staff of volunteers, PWA's enjoy music which frequently takes the form of live entertainment, and everyone enjoys the social aspect of these weekly gatherings.

We want to say thanks to the staff at the church and to the marvelous group of volunteers who make this delightful gift to PWA's possible.

To those AIDS and ARC patients who have not experienced Tuesdays at the Shrine, we invite you to join us for a great meal and good fellowship each Tuesday at 6:00 PM downtown at The Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, on the corner of Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. and Central Ave.

NAPWA MEETING SCHEDULE

NAPWA General meetings are held on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. Meetings are held at AID Atlanta from 7:00-9:00 PM. With the variety of projects and committees there is something of interest for everyone. The general meeting schedule is as follows: March 24, April 14, April 28, May 12, May 26, June 9, and June 23.

Making Room, Cont.

Continued from Page 10

common bond of cultural Judaism. No matter where one perceives one's self to be on that spectrum, there is a place to celebrate and participate in one's Judaism. The congregation is currently considering affiliating with either Reform Judaism or Reconstructionist Judaism. That decision will not be made until sometime this summer. Bet Haverim conducts a Hebrew class, a conversational Hebrew class and a Jewish Studies class.

The Congregation is active in volunteering at the Shearith Israel shelter for women and the Temple's shelter for couples. They are part of an ecumenical group that is working to start an AIDS hospice and are involved with the Names Project. They will be conducting a service at the Southeastern Conference of Lesbian and Gays and will conduct a workshop on what it means to be Lesbian/Gay and Jewish. They will also be participating in the ecumenical service at the conference.

Bet Haverim meets the 1st and 3rd Fridays at the Quaker House, 1384 Fairview Road, N.E. at 8:30. The services are followed by an Oneg Shabbat. On the 2nd Friday of each month they meet at 7:30 at the Quaker House for a Shabbat Seder, followed by a service at 8:30. There is an Activity Line listing all upcoming events: 642-3467.

PLGC

PLGC is an organization of ministers, elders, deacons, members and friends of the Presbyterian Church (USA) that "strives to offer care, affirmation, and support to lesbians and gay members, their families and friends." They meet to study and raise the concerns of gay and lesbian members and seek full membership and participation for them. PLGC encourages the mission and ministry of the PCUSA with the gay/lesbian community.

The local chapter of PLGC meets monthly for study and fellowship and worships once a month at various Presbyterian churches in the metro Atlanta area. Currently, about 15% of the members are women. For more information, call 373-5830.

Integrity

Integrity is a group within the Episcopal Church that serves two functions: to represent

the gay community in the Episcopal Church and to represent the Church to the gay/lesbian community. Interestingly, Integrity was founded thirteen years ago in Fort Valley, Georgia. It has now grown into a national organization. Ten years ago the Atlanta chapter was formed. The local chapter is not as political as the national chapter - or as some other local chapters (e.g. Rochester, NY). There are between 25-40 members, predominately male.

Integrity meets on the 2nd and 4th Fridays at 7:30 p.m. at All Saints Episcopal Church on the corner of West Peachtree and North Avenue. The meeting always begins with a celebration of the Eucharist. Once a month, following the service, there is a potluck, and once a month there is a more serious meeting following the service with discussions of current topics of interest. Recent topics include the National March, co-dependence, and organizational strategies for the General Convention.

The local chapter of Integrity puts out a newsletter, *Ex Ubris* (out of the shadow) that goes to all the Episcopal parishes in Georgia. The Reverend Christina Pope is the chaplain. For more information, call 875-7004.

Other groups that fall into this somewhat loose category of denominationally-related groups are Dignity (Roman Catholic), groups affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (e.g. the Unitarian Universalist Lesbian and Gay Community) and Evangelical Outreach Ministries. I'll look at them next time along with the church that was started by and for the gay community. In yet another column I'll describe alternative organizations and give their information. If you know of a group you'd like to have included, drop me a line in care of this paper.

We are finding our ways spiritually with as much exuberance and diversity as we have found our ways politically and socially. It is a tribute to our community that we make room and create spaces, challenge assumptions and blaze new trails in our inner lives.

- Connie Tuttle

Connie Tuttle holds a Master of Divinity from Columbia Theological Seminary. She is currently considered "unordainable" in the Presbyterian Church (USA) because she is a self-affirming lesbian.

American citizens, however, the entrants are subject to harsh and stringent rules governing their freedom. The detainees must show reason for their release, rather than the government showing reason for their incarceration.

Carla Dudeca, a member of the Coalition for Cuban Detainees in Atlanta and an attorney for Legal Aid in Atlanta, is now handling the case of a man who has been denied release from the detention center due to a traffic violation arrest in California. The INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) is allowed to consider an applicant's arrest record

Continued on Page 15

Gay Cubans

Continued from Page 6

a Seventh Day Adventist, and when the MCC (Metropolitan Community Church) was there, everyone was gay." This desperation move to get out of the camps further complicated an already confusing situation.

Escoria

The definition of homosexuality in Cuba differs widely from what citizens of the United States recognize as the correct meaning. According to Dr. Valerio, there is no such concept as "gay pride" among Cuban homosexuals. While Cuba does not consider homosexuality a crime, it does consider it a mental illness, and those people caught by the neighborhood committees in suspicious acts, or who exhibit stereotypical personality traits, are thrown into the nearest dark hole for the rest of their lives.

In Cuban society, where concepts of machismo and belief in the Catholic Church still hold considerable sway, gay Cubans are "escoria", scum. Thus, while many men might exhibit homosexual tendencies, and even participate in same gender sex, they never consciously consider themselves to be gay. They are only satisfying a need in the most convenient manner available. Tales of rape and subsequent violence are rampant among the minority of men who act as the passive partner in male-male sexual encounters.

The Passage of Time

Of the 125,000 Cubans who entered this country during the Mariel boatlift in the spring and summer of 1980, all but 125 have been free in the United States at one point in time. Unlike

Lesbian & Gay Youth on Atlanta Streets

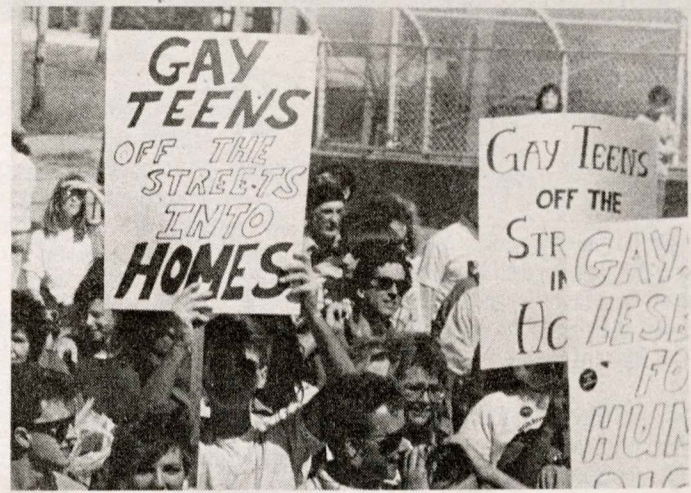


Photo by Gerald Jones

Walking-tour guides of Atlanta caution visitors not to stray far off of Peachtree Street in Midtown. The glamour and lights of Atlanta's best known street are supplanted in the space of one block by the violence, substance abuse, and prostitution that inflict the everyday world of homeless men, women and children.

Most distressing to homeless-rights advocates are the burgeoning numbers of young people fleeing destructive families, only to land in the hostile back alleys of the "City Too Busy To Hate."

Four blocks off of Peachtree, just three blocks past Cyprus Street, the home of Atlanta's male prostitutes, there lies an oasis of hope for American society's "throwaways" - The Bridge Family Center, Inc.

The Bridge stands in the shadows of Atlanta's most progressive architecture, and exists in a daily world where the needs of housing, food, and counseling for homeless youth are never fulfilled. In addition to counseling for homeless youth and their families, the Bridge maintains a shelter, the Lodge, which is operated by the Salvation Army for the Bridge.

According to Betty Tilly, a therapist at the Bridge, at least one client staying in the Lodge each week is coping with some type of gender identification and/or sexual orientation question. Statistically, that translates to a 23 percent incidence of gay and lesbian youth among those children seeking shelter from Atlanta's streets.

Bridge therapist Paul Plate is quick to point out that these figures do not include those children and teenagers who have resigned themselves to a life on the streets. "The real street kids don't go to shelters. They don't want to deal with an authority base, having to be accountable - being locked in at night, being told when to go to bed, having to eat the meals prepared for them, and helping out with the chores like cleaning the bathrooms."

Plate estimates that as many as 65 percent of the clients seen by the Bridge staff are referrals made by other youth agencies, most notably the Department of Youth Services and the Juvenile

Court System. The Lodge's 24 beds are never adequate for the demands for space. Its existence is a prize bit of information shared carefully with newcomers to Atlanta's streets, that ensures its constant occupancy.

The problems the young people face, often involve subjects not easily confronted by the morally squeamish. The staff of the Bridge and the Lodge undergo constant education in how to deal with issues such as physical and sexual abuse, emotional abuse, homosexuality, and gender confusion. The staff must also seek to counter the pervasiveness of drug and alcohol addiction, AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, and teenage pregnancy. The Salvation Army staff at the Lodge receives high marks from Plate for their ability to set aside personal moral concerns in the attempt to address the needs of the clientele.

Although the Bridge does not attempt to "segregate ... by sexual orientation," the staff does conduct a twice-weekly therapy group which specifically addresses questions of sexuality and gender identification. The purpose of the group is to enable the children to explore the most basic questions of human sexuality in a positive manner, and enhance their own self-image and self-esteem.

While open to the idea of individuals offering assistance to the young people, Plate rhetorically demanded, "Where are the hotlines dedicated to these kids? Where are the role models? Runaway is a verb, and these children are actively fleeing in terror. They are the victims of abuse, ... the responsibility for which, they oftentimes internalize."

Citing the special needs of minority youth, Plate urged an immediate response from the gay and lesbian community in Atlanta. According to Plate, the need is for a community-wide response, tailored to the needs of the children, not to the needs of the people and organizations involved in any programs adopted. One of his stated goals is to "help them realize that there are resources available to help them, and there are adults who want to help them rather than abuse them."

- Chris Duncan

Office Hours
By Appointment

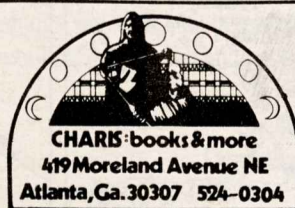


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Special Thanks to

**The Georgia AIDS Legislative
Coalition**

Your commitment and hard work are
greatly appreciated

Johnny Walsh & David A. Strawn

KEEP REFRIGERATED

Star Gays

by Martia Proba

During this period, you may notice especially weird things getting your goat. Mars, Saturn, Uranus (my all-time favorite) and Neptune are all in Capricorn, the sign of the patiently ambitious and Richard Nixon.



ARIES With four planets in your career house all month and the Sun in your first house after the 20th, you should go all out in your efforts to get ahead on the job.

The New Moon on the 17th is an especially good day to start new work projects but be quiet about it.



TAURUS Take a long trip to visit your lover's relatives sometime between the 20th and 24th. However, this is not the time to reveal your bizarre sexual proclivities to in-laws.



GEMINI The Quarter Moon late on the 24th is an ideal time for you Mercurial types to lighten up and bring some humor into partnership affairs, especially those involving money - or the lack thereof.



CANCER An affair started before the 20th can result in religious intensity, especially if begun on the New Moon of the 17th. A good possibility would be the Virgo next door.



LEO Those many of you who love Aries partners should have happy hunting after the 20th. But before romance, take care of your health and pets, especially on the 20th.



VIRGO Before the 20th, the Sun and four other planets combine to keep you continuously aroused - in one way or another.

New sports are particularly favored on the 17th - enjoy life's many pleasures.



LIBRA After the 20th, close relationships are put to the test. Stay away from lawyers. Family is very important to you now but your ruling planet in your eighth house tends to make such ties center around money.



SCORPIO On the 23rd, your imagination can take you to the heights, pleasurewise. Watch out for other Scorpios on the 30th and 31st as the Moon and Pluto in your sign make all of you crazy.



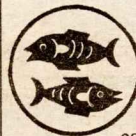
SAGITTARIUS The clump of planets in your house of finance keeps your attention on the dollar sign. After the 20th, the Sun helps you have a creative love life. Don't mix money and love on the 30th.



CAPRICORN Saturn, your ruler, is in charge and ambitious. Usually you plod along but on the 24th, messages from new friends spur you into romantic action.



AQUARIUS Everything you do for a while will have a secretive, behind-the-scenes feeling. Your little used intuitive side can surprise you in a matter of the heart on the 29th.



PISCES The 17th is your day to leap ahead with creative love plans. Don't suggest commitment at this time, especially with a Gemini.

Dear Nadisa

"Dear Nadisa" arrived on the 2:40 p.m. southbound train yesterday in search of the Lesbian Community. Is there something on your mind? Send her your questions in care of *Southern Voice*, Post Office Box 54719, Atlanta, GA 30308 (confidentiality assured) and look for your answer each issue right here.

DEAR NADISA:

I have been a celibate single Lesbian for 2 years. Recently I met a woman who touches my very soul. She is intensely sexual but I want to remain celibate a few more months for spiritual reasons. She may not go along with this and I don't want to lose her. What do I do?

Having a woman touch your very soul sounds pretty spiritual to me, honey. Are you clear that your reasons for celibacy are indeed "spiritual" and are not centered around issues of TRUST and VULNERABILITY? And how do you know your work will be done "in a few more months"? Are you aiming for summer solstice, or what? I'm assuming you have kept her sexually happy so far or have agreed on some kind of compromise. However, since you seem unsure over her willingness to stay with your celibate self, you need to talk to her to find out what her ideas and feelings are. Based on this, you must then decide what your own priority is.

DEAR NADISA:

I am a gay woman who has no girlfriend. I have lived in this town for awhile and have found it hard to break into the gay community. Everyone seems to be in couples or cliques. I feel like I don't belong with gay women or with normal women either. Can you help me get with other gay women?

15-12, 15-9
Match 8 Renegade's D Texas
15-6, 15-10

Here are the rankings for the season so far:

- 1) Crazy Ray'z
- 5) Bulldog & Co.
- 2) The Armory
- 6) Backstreet
- 3) Renegades Saloon
- 7) Deana's One Mo' Time
- 4) Burkhart's Pub
- 8) Texas Drilling Co.

I want to thank everyone there for the kindness and the information; it was a great evening of game-playing, folks. Well, to whet your appetite, I'll be covering the Hotlanta Clay Court Invitational sponsored by ATTA next, and then the Hotlanta Spring Invitational with the Hotlanta Softball League after that. Can ya'll stand it? It's gonna be great! 'Til then, remember to get out there and do something that makes a difference. You'll be hearing from me again soon.

-Michael McMillan

First of all, it sounds like you think gay women are not "normal". This attitude may be your REAL problem. If you feel unacceptable or "abnormal" because you are a gay woman, you will probably not be well-received by the very Lesbians you are wanting to meet. Next, get serious about meeting women. Become more involved in the activities and events occurring in the Lesbian community. Don't just go to the next dance, concert or brunch, but help make it happen. Visit the nearest women's bookstore or restaurant. Get a Lesbian magazine or newsletter to stay abreast of what is going on. You get into a clique by doing what the members do. No one will find you if you remain a couch potato.

DEAR NADISA:

My lover has a glass eye. Although we have been together for 2 1/2 years, she is still embarrassed about her prosthesis. She insists that all the lights are out when she removes her eye and comes to bed. Nothing I say can convince her that I accept her as she is. This problem is a source of tension in our relationship now. What can I do to diffuse this potentially disastrous situation?

I do not understand why you cannot simply allow your woman to remove her prosthesis in the dark as she pleases. Do not try so hard to convince her that you accept her as she is. Just ACCEPT her. If you can be less conscious of her glass eye, perhaps, in time, she will become more self-confident and less embarrassed. Be patient. And stop making such a big deal over it. Just love her up and make her happy.

Sports, Continued

Continued From Page 11

many people together and they get warm and excited, they secrete pheromones from the pores, which naturally gets others of the same genus and phylum a bit excited, too. I don't know how sound this theory is, but I can tell you this. The volleyball games started out lively enough when there was just that canned gym spray in the air, but as the air warmed up and the night wore on, and the gym smell was reinforced by the more pungent bouquet of stressed muscles, the games got downright exhilarating! My favorite part was the pre-game huddles, where the team gathers in a circle and decides on nothing more I'm sure than what they're going to shout as they break ranks. When one of the teams broke with a resounding "Yeehaw!", this Texas boy's heart

just about burst with pride.

Now I could describe the games to you match by match, but let's face it; you should have been there. Anyway, you know what volleyball looks like. So I'll just give you the match results and the standings as of March 4. Oh, and to save you the problem I had, the "D" stands for "defeated".

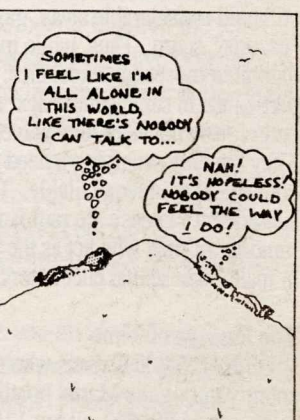
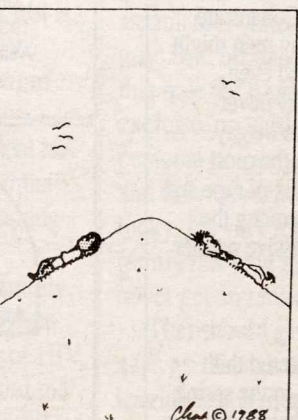
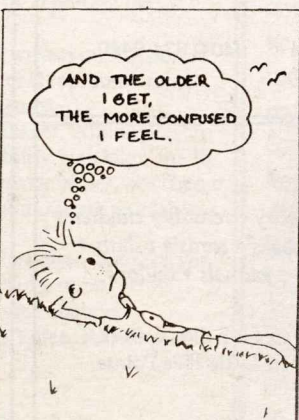
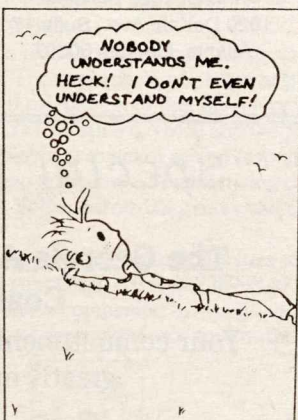
- Match 1 Armory D Burkhart's
15-10, 13-15, 15-8
Match 2 Crazy Ray'z D Deana's
15-7, 15-13
Match 3 Bulldog's D Texas Drilling Co.
15-8, 15-6
Match 4 Renegades D Backstreet
15-8, 9-15, 15-7
Match 5 Crazy Ray'z D Burkhart's
15-9, 6-15, 15-9
Match 6 Armory D Deana's
15-11, 15-9
Match 7 Bulldog's D Backstreet

Nadisa awaits
your letters



bittersweet

by Charles Haver



Gay Cubans

Continued from Page 13

as well as conviction record when determining eligibility for release.

The Department of Justice considers all of the detainees to be "dangerous and unfit to enter society." According to Dr. Valerio, that is a misleading statement. He estimates that of the 7,000 people either currently detained or serving sentences prior to detainment by the INS, "only ten or twelve are in for violent crimes such as murder and rape, perhaps as many as fifty are in for hard drug crimes. The rest are being detained for minor offenses. ...I personally know of a man who has been in the prison system for six years because he urinated in a parking lot, and was arrested for public exposure and indecency."

New Allegations

When the Cubans detained at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary and the Oakland, Louisiana Federal Alien Detention Center rioted in December of 1987, new charges of large numbers of gay men being detained solely on the basis of their sexual preference began to emerge. The most damning evidence was provided by Frank Harris, an Anglo prisoner released by the Cubans during the siege. John Hubert reported Harris' allegations in his syndicated column. According to Harris, as many as fifty percent of the Cuban detainees are gay, and they staged mock fights in order to distract guards while other detainees slipped into the crawl-space above the paneled ceiling in order to have sex.

All sources contacted in regard to questions of the number of homosexuals being detained varied widely in their estimates. Dudeca was unsure of exact figures, but doubted the quoted figure of fifty percent. After making the distinction between same-gender sex instigated by close confinement for long periods of time, and true sexual orientation, she felt that the number of gay Cubans would closer approach the standard figure of ten percent.

When asked whether or not the Cubans were being detained for their sexual orientation, Dudeca admitted "It's an issue, but not usually the stated reason for detainment."

When contacted for comment, Tom Bornemann of the National Institute of Mental Health's Refugee Mental Health Program stated, "The federal government does not keep statistics on the number of homosexuals in the Cuban detainee population." Continuing, he said that a detainee's sexual orientation has "no bearing on any decision regarding their status in the United States."

According to Dudeca, however, while the

detainee's sexuality might not be listed as the official reason, it is always a consideration. She recently represented a man before the INS panel which decides who should and should not be released. The only crime the man was convicted of was misdemeanor sodomy in California. His request for release was denied. The official reason for denial was "no entrance papers." None of the Marielito Cubans had entry papers to the United States.

When asked to rate the chances of a gay man among the detained Cuban population being released, Dudeca sarcastically replied, "If you're not a middle-aged white man who goes to church every Sunday, then you don't fit in our society."

For this reason, many of the people who work with the Cuban detainees caution their clients to "pass as straight," and take great pains not to bring up any incidents that might betray a person's true sexuality to the review panels.

The Marielito Cubans have now been split up into groups of less than 200, and shipped all over the country to prevent the occurrence of further rioting. After three months of inaction, the INS has begun the process of reviewing all cases of current detainees. The Marielitos now live in a state of constant lockdown, a criminal justice term for no contact with other people, and limited, heavily supervised recreation time. They spend most of their time in their cells. They come to their hearings in handcuffs and ankle-chains.

Human rights advocates are unsure of the Department of Justice's new found commitment to integrating as many of the Marielito Cubans into American society as possible.

Even with the intervention of concerned American citizens, it is unlikely that a true statistical picture will ever be drawn of the gay Cubans among the Mariel refugees. Their distrust of anyone resembling an authoritative government figure will distort whatever figures are reported, as they jockey positions attempting to get the "right" answer which will enable them to stay in the United States.

Sexual freedom is a luxury compared to freedom of thought.

It is reasonable to assume that at least ten percent of the Marielitos are gay and lesbian. It would be a rare historical irony if more escaped with their oppressor's help.

In response to the charges leveled by Harris, Representative Barney Frank (D-MA) is asking that anyone knowing of gay men being held among the detainees contact his office. The address is Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20000.

-Chris Duncan

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If anyone is interested in being involved in a local buyers club that would allow you to purchase AL-721 (egg lecithin) at a much lower price, please contact Gregg at the Atlanta NAPWA office, 874-7926. The more people interested will mean even lower prices. Call for details.

Employment

AIDS Help, Inc., in Key West Fla seeks an Executive Director. Qualifications required are a Bachelor's or Master's degree in a related field, a proven record of

communication skills, and a thorough knowledge of grant writing, financial management, and public relations.

The position offers a competitive benefit package and salary commensurate with experience. Interested parties are asked to send a resume by May 1, 1988 to: Search Committee, AIDS Help, Inc., P.O. Box 4374, Key West, FL., 33041.

For Sale

Echo in the Woods - poetry by Davin. Illustrated, 76-page book. Perfect bound. \$7 - ten note cards. Morning-Glory Ink, PO Box 7695, Atlanta, Ga., 30357

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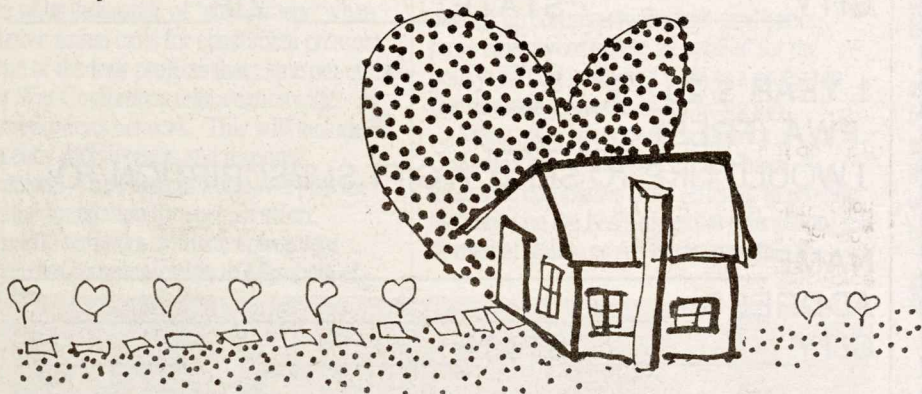
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Kurt Rahn continued

Continued from Page 10

began when Kurt and others passed a bucket to collect seed money for the organization. Since that night Kurt has worked continuously, along with others, to make NAPWA a viable organization, offering a unique opportunity to and for people with AIDS. He has also accepted numerous opportunities to speak loudly and openly about his personal experience with ARC and the feelings involved with dealing with it. Kurt says it was overwhelming in the beginning to talk about it but now it seems simple to him. People are desperate for personal, honest feedback and Kurt has reached a place where he finds it important to talk.

That importance stems from a bargain Kurt has made with himself about his own life. The first element is that Kurt can process his anger by doing something to help, to work to change his little corner of the world, instead of letting the anger eat away at him. The second element of

importance is that Kurt is bargaining with time. He has not experienced any more than the little side effects from his AZT and other treatment. He keeps up with experimental drugs and figures what would be best for him when and if the larger health problems occur. He is trying to orchestrate his care in order to buy the most time. Doing this may allow him to live long enough for medical research and treatment to come up with some of the solutions to prolong his life. He looks at his action as a challenge, a way to try to get society to deal with the issues.

Kurt's life depends to some degree on doing his job well. He has made a hard bargain between himself and buying time. In the interim, he is giving of himself to change the larger community in a powerful and positive way. Kurt is a living working example of strength in a time where it is desperately needed. It is hopeful that Kurt may get the better part of the bargain.

- Rebecca Ranson

Names Quilt Coming to Atlanta

AID Atlanta is sponsoring the Memorial Day weekend appearance of the Names Project quilt in Atlanta. The quilt premiered at the National March on Washington last October and is now touring the country.

The Names Project is a nationwide campaign to memorialize the tens of thousands of Americans whose lives have been lost to the AIDS epidemic. Thousands of family members, loved ones, and friends created the more than 3,000 hand-stitched panels. Each of the 3'x 6' panels is a small statement about an individual person. When sewn together, they make a much larger statement about the enormous impact of the epidemic on the fabric of American society.

If you have a friend or loved one that you would like to memorialize with a panel, local quilting bees are being held beginning this month. There are two times and locations: beginning Feb. 9th at Atlanta Custom Quilted Bedspreads, 1758 Cheshire Bridge Rd. each Tuesday from 7-10PM, and beginning Feb. 14th at AID Atlanta each Sunday from 1-5PM. No sewing skills are required. Please bring your ideas, fabric, creativity, and any special materials you want for your quilt.

Also in conjunction with the Atlanta exhibit of the Names Project, Rebecca Ranson and SAME have preliminary plans to premiere a new play which will be drawn from the personal experiences of PWA's. PWA's will be needed for both interviews and actual appearance in the play. Although the project is in the formulative stages, interested persons are urged to contact NAPWA at 874-7926.

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