P. O. Box 200070
Anchorage, AK 99520-0070
Address Service Requested
Are you missing local and national news about the gay and lesbian community and the opportunity to network locally?

Your membership in Identity, Inc. gets you twelve issues of the NorthView, Anchorage's lesbigay newspaper. Simply return this page with your tax deductible $25.00 membership/donation (more if you can, less if you can't) to the address indicated below.

The NorthView has: a complete monthly calendar of events, a directory of lesbigay friendly businesses, national columnists, political information, editorials, local news and opinion pieces, cartoons, a balance of male and female contributors and much, much more!

Once you get your first issue, you'll wonder how you ever got along without it.

---

Membership/Pledge Form

Identity, Inc., PO Box 200070, Anchorage, AK 99520-0070

Yes! I want to be a part of Identity, Inc. I understand that my membership will expire one year from this date. My membership entitles me to vote at annual meetings and to receive the NorthView, Identity's monthly newspaper and other periodic mailings. I have the option to NOT receive the newsletter and mailings if I check here: ___

Enclosed is my contribution of $25.00 (basic membership).

I'd like to contribute ___ $25.00 ___ $50.00 ___ $100.00 more just to help out.

I'd like to make a monthly pledge. Please send a reminder each month to send my supporting commitment of $_____. Contributions are deductible to the full extent of the law.

Please PRINT clearly:

Name: ____________________________
Mailing address: ____________________________
City: __________ State: __________ Zip: __________
Signature: ____________________________
Phone (home): ____________________________ (work): ____________________________
I got this copy of NorthView: ___ from a friend, ___ at a bookstore, ___ at a bar, ___ from a business.

I want to show my support for the lesbigay community in other ways: (Please circle.)

NorthView: typing, editing, reporting, graphics, goffering

Potlucks: setup, cleanup, monthly programs

HelpLine: telephone volunteer, training, potlucks, resource manual, volunteer scheduling

National Coming Out Day Dinner/Dance: organize speak out, organize dance

Lesbigay Pride Picnic: organization, publicity, setup, cleanup, entertainment, vendors, permits

Fund-raising: progressive dinners, bake sales, dinner/dances, yard sales, picnics, other
Table of contents

Advertisers

Alta’s Bed and Breakfast .................... 28
Alaskan AIDS Assist. Assn. back cover 29
Alaskan Urban Coffee & Art .............. 35
Anchorage Press ............................ 20
Apollo Travel Service ..................... 6
Barron Investments ........................ 12
Bela Bodnar ................................. 12
Breast Cancer Detection ................. 14
Capri Cinema ................................ 8
City Mortgage .............................. 13
Classified ads ................................ 31
Courtney’s ................................. 18
Damron ...................................... 17
Design/Craft ................................ 8
Essential Touch Massage ............... 32
Fotos by Frank .............................. 22
Freedman, Ken .............................. 17
Frigid North ................................ 3
Gallery Bed & Breakfast ................ 20
Gabriel Salon ................................ 21
Hill Clinic ................................... 31
Hoeting, Jill ................................ 33
Identity Helpline .......................... 1
Island Watch B & B ....................... 29
Mendel & Associates ..................... 33
National Gay & Lesbian Helpline .... 3
Oldtime Music Co. ......................... 23
PFLAG Southcentral ....................... 25
Potluck ...................................... 26
Professional Infusion ..................... 24
Rhodes, Phyllis ............................ 29
Rona Mason, Realtor ..................... 7
Sauerdough Lodging ...................... 12
Short, Gene ................................ 14
Short, Sylvia L. ........................... 19
ST.A.R. .................................. 25
Sweeping Lady ............................. 34
TimeFrame .................................. 27
Triangle Tours .............................. 25
Tryck Nursery ................................ 27
Unitarian Fellowship ...................... 10
Wave, The .................................. 26

Views

Barbara J. Soule .............................. 10
Calendar, current and on-going ....... 42
Club notes .................................. 40
Comics ..................................... 11, 27, 37, 40
Cyberlust .................................. 42
Dan Carter .................................. 9
David Bianco ............................... 30
Directory ................................... 38
Editorial .................................... 2
Fairbanks News ............................ 28
Imperial Court ............................ 31
Jen Kohout ................................... 18
Karen Carlisle ............................. 11
Ken Lovering .............................. 16
Lee Lynch ................................... 21
Masthead ................................... 1
Michael Thomas Ford ................... 22
Paige Turner ............................... 19
Paula Martinac ............................ 15
Simon LeVay ............................... 5
Travel, Bob DeLosch .................... 6
Volunteer Spotlight ...................... 7

Advertising rates

Classified ad (five lines) .... $ 15.00
Business Card .................. 25.00
Quarter page ................. 40.00
Half page ...................... 65.00
Full page .................... 100.00
Back page .................. 125.00
Insert (one page) ............ 50.00
Insert (two plus pages) .... 25.00
(each page)

Discounts

Three months .................. 10%
Six months ..................... 15%
Twelve months .............. 20%
Identity NorthView is a monthly publication of Identity, Inc., a non-profit [501(c)(3)], Alaskan corporation concerned with issues of sexual identity. The NorthView is published as a community service and the views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the directors, officers or members of Identity, Inc. The publication of an individual's or organization's name or photo in NorthView is not to be construed as any indication of the sexual orientation of such persons or organizations unless so specified.

Identity Board of Directors
Chairs: Shirley Randal and Kurt Parish; Treasurer: Mikel R. Haase; Secretary: Joyce Bauer; Members: Candy Bonham, Greg Kramer, Ruth Mathes, Amy O'Mara.

NorthView Editorial Board

Distribution
The NorthView is mailed (bulk mail) to members of Identity. Identity's mailing list is confidential and is not sold, given or loaned to anyone; however, special mailings under the auspices of Identity are occasionally sanctioned. Copies of NorthView are also distributed at select businesses in the Anchorage area. Financial contributions are gladly accepted to defray mailing costs.

Upon request, you may receive the NorthView in a First Class large envelope. Cost is $60 per year (includes membership in Identity and private mailing).

Reproducing
Please feel free to copy the NorthView and give it to anyone you feel will enjoy it or benefit from it. Articles that are copyrighted must be so noted on any copies.

Submissions
We welcome articles and letters from community individuals and organizations. Ideal length is 750 words or less. Please submit on 3.5 (IBM compatible or MAC HD). All media will be returned. All contributions must be signed, but upon request names will be withheld or pseudonyms used. NorthView reserves the right to edit as necessary and to refuse printing any article submitted.

ARE YOU “IN THE PINK”?!

LOOK AT THE RENEWAL DATE ABOVE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS ON THE MAILING LABEL. IF IT IS HIGHLIGHTED IN FLUORESCENT PINK, YOUR SUBSCRIPTION HAS EITHER EXPIRED OR WILL EXPIRE THIS MONTH. HELP THE NORTHVIEW STAY “IN THE BLACK” — RENEW! RENEW! RENEW!

Deadlines
All articles must be received by the 5th of the month for inclusion in that month’s NorthView.

Advertising
Rates are displayed on the bottom of the table of contents. Contact NorthView by mail or through the HelpLine at 258-4777. Advertising can be submitted camera-ready or can be composed for you for a negotiated fee. NorthView does not accept Personals, nor does it accept advertising that is sexist, racist, discriminatory or sexually explicit.

Mail
Editor, Identity NorthView, P.O. Box 200070, Anchorage, AK 99520-0070.

Phone
Anchorage Gay & Lesbian Helpline 907-258-4777. Hours: daily, 6pm-11pm. Messages left during off hours will be returned as soon as possible.

Anchorage Gay & Lesbian Helpline
258-4777
A community service of Identity, Inc.
PO Box 200070, Anchorage AK 99520
Editorial

Where Is the “Community?”

On the night of October 3, the campus of UAA came alive as the Alaska Pride Conference kicked off with a potluck dinner followed by a fun-filled evening of local entertainment. Saturday morning conference attendees gathered at the Lucy Cuddy Center to hear keynote addresses by nationally-noted (and controversial) gay authors Andrew Holleran and Lesléa Newman. Following each keynote, participants gathered in small groups to discuss themes raised by the speakers. Ideas and experiences were shared, allowing each of us to learn more about ourselves, each other, and the diverse community we share.

This gathering of the Alaska gay, lesbian, and bisexual “community” and its friends was the fourth such gathering since public hearings on a proposed municipal ordinance to protect gays and lesbians from discrimination in 1994. A small group of local activists recognized the need for healing and regrouping in the “community” following these often painful and vicious hearings. With the assistance of Rebecca Rogers, then Executive Director of 4A’s, a grant from the Seattle Pride Foundation was acquired and conference planning began in earnest. “In Search of ... A New Vision for Gays, Lesbians, and Bisexuals” was the theme of that first conference. Gay and lesbian community development was the underlying foundation and goal for this conference — and for all subsequent conferences.

Some 180 people attended that first conference in the fall of 1994. I was not among them. Although I had known I was gay since my teenage years, I had suppressed those feelings and remained closeted. During the spring and summer of 1994, many factors began coming together in my life and I began taking those first tentative steps out of the closet and into the gay and lesbian community of Anchorage. But I wasn’t yet ready to plunge headlong into gay society. By the fall of 1995, I felt comfortable joining some 250 other people for the 2nd annual Alaska Pride Conference. It was enlightening — and comforting — for me to see the diversity of people who make up our “community” come together in an open and accepting environment, offering love and support to each and every one of us in attendance.

Shortly after the 1995 conference I was asked to join the board of Identity, Inc., which I did with some trepidation. Shortly thereafter, Identity became the umbrella organization under which the Alaska Pride Conference Committee operated. And thus began my affiliation with this group of dedicated community activists. I have been a part of the planning committee for the last two Pride Conferences, as well as for the initial inaugural event of the new Speakers Series. There is a feeling among committee members that the Pride Conference may no longer be meeting the needs of the “community” and that a new direction, and probably some new blood, is required if we are to continue moving toward our goal of community development. Attendance dropped to 225 at the 1996 conference; only 160 registered for the 1997 conference.

Although there have been new faces on the committee each year, the driving force continues to be a few key community members, most having been involved with the conference since its inception. These people are struggling to understand what it is their “community” needs in order to continue to build those bridges which can tie our “community” together internally, as well as to the larger community of which we are a part.

If our “community” makes up 10 percent of the community-at-large, where are the rest of us, 60,000 Alaskan gays, lesbians, and bisexuals? Even if we are only one percent of the community-at-large, where are we? That is still a lot of Alaskans. Think about it! Only 160 people registered for the 1997 Alaska Pride Conference, including a significant number of our allies. What will it take for the rest of us to get “out of the closet” and participate in our community?

The Alaska Pride Conference is changing focus and will be working under the new title of the Alaska Pride Speakers Series from now on. Events will be planned as there is interest in the community — led by subcommittees operating under the financial and organizational framework in place with the Alaska Pride Speaker Series Organizing Committee. In this way, we hope to involve more people from the community in planning events and better to meet the needs of our diverse community. Come to us with your ideas! Maybe we can work with you to bring them to fruition! Where are you, our silent and invisible “community?”

You can contact the Alaska Pride Speakers Series Organizing Committee by writing to us at P. O. Box 244731, Anchorage, AK 99524, or by calling 907-566-2048. You may contact Identity, Inc. at P. O. Box 200070, Anchorage, AK 99520, or by calling Identity’s Gay and Lesbian HelpLine at 907-258-4777 or 1-888-901-9876 (in-state only).

Lesléa Newman and Andrew Holleran at Alaska Pride Conference.
Chicago Church a Spiritual Home for Gay African-Americans

by Michael A. Haase

In Chicago, the Church of the Open Door opened a year ago with the hope of providing a spiritual home for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered African-Americans. Often feeling either not welcome at various churches or that their spiritual needs were not being met, a group of black gays and lesbians set out to found a church where they could feel at home.

The Church of the Open Door is affiliated with the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association, both long-time supporters of the gay community. It began as a weekly prayer meeting in the home of its co-pastors, the Reverend Alma Faith Crawford and Karen Hutt, partners who longed for a unique spiritual home. “We both longed to see a church environment where African-American gays and lesbians don’t have to leave their culture at the door, where they don’t have to leave their sexual orientation at the door,” said Hutt. “We dreamed of a community where black gay and lesbian folks could thrive.”

All but a handful of the roughly 125 members of the church are African-American, but everyone is made to feel welcome, members stress. “The African-American church experience is so central to our lives, and being detached from that is one of the most wrenching experiences imaginable,” explains member David Jackson. “This church seeks to heal that rift. You can find yourself here.” Another member, Cedric Speights, reflected on the hypocrisy sometimes forced upon gay worshippers at other churches. “I would say to my friends, Your own pastor is telling you that homosexuals are damned to hell, and you’re saying ‘Yes’ and ‘Amen.’ How do you stand it?”

Last October, the United Church of Christ donated a brick church building to the congregation. In addition, the Unitarian Universalist Association has given the church close to $100,000 in funding as part of a three-year commitment, as well as providing consultation and support. UUA extension ministry director Margaret Beard says the church stands as an example, not only because of who it serves but how it serves them. “They are a model of church that makes sense,” Beard said. “That is exemplary for any people we are attempting to serve. They are responsible to their community. They do things with great love and high quality. They have a clear vision of what they are about.”

Services at the church are a mix of Christianity, African-American pride and gay pride. In a procession at the beginning of services, the Bible and cross are carried to the front of the church, followed by the rainbow colors of the gay pride banner and finally by the red, green and black colors of the black liberation flag. The services themselves are a mixture of singing and sermonizing, often with an emphasis on being black and gay. “It’s very important for people to hear that from the pulpit,” Reverend Crawford says, “to break the silence.”

Barbara Housley, a senior member of the church, described the church’s mission best when she said “The Church of the Open Door is a vibrant young church that will help nurture and educate the coming generation, be they gay, heterosexual, or transgendered, that we can learn to help and love each other with Christ’s love to make things better.”

This article was drawn from an article in the September/October issue of World, the magazine of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

“Diana’s impact upon the lesbian and gay world is almost without parallel. She singlehandedly destigmatized HIV when she opened Britain’s first HIV ward in 1987, and was supportive to the core.”
—Paul Clements, editor of London’s gay The Pink Paper.

HAVE A SAFE AND SANE HALLOWEEN!

Frigid North Company
Electronic parts supply

Suppliers of:

✓ Batteries
✓ Computer parts and equipment
✓ Electronic parts
✓ Telephone wiring
✓ Television antennas
✓ Audio wiring
✓ ... and much, much more

Phone: 561-4633
Fax: 562-3219
1207 West 36th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Gay and Lesbian National Hotline
1(888) THE GLNH (843-4564) Toll-Free
Free peer-counseling, information and referrals
http://www.glnh.org/
Open Mon-Fri 6-11p.m. EST (2-7p.m. AST)
A Deadly Dance

As AIDS Cases Decline Sharply, Some Gay Men Are Returning To Unsafe Sex. They Call It Barebacking.

Joseph Hilburn goes for an HIV test every six months and reads everything he can find about AIDS. He doesn't want to get it. Yet that doesn't stop him from having unsafe sex two or three times a week — "more, if I’m lucky," he says. Hilburn, 32, says he's recently noticed a change: it's much easier to find men willing to have unprotected sex. "I've been to clubs where there's sex all over the place and they have a little fruit bowl full of condoms and it's covered with dust," says Hilburn. "The taboo has worn off."

Both gays and straights have struggled with the inconvenience of safe sex since the AIDS epidemic made condoms necessary. But as AIDS deaths plummeted 23 percent in the last year, due in large part to new drugs known as protease inhibitors, a small but growing minority of gay men have begun seeking out unsafe sex again. Because of the months-long HIV incubation period, it's too early to tell if this new attitude will reverse the declines in infection rates among homosexuals.

But the signs are ominous. A small study conducted by doctors at the University of California, San Francisco, and published last month in the New England Journal of Medicine found that 15 percent of the men surveyed had already engaged in higher-risk sex because they're less concerned about AIDS. Scores of America Online subscribers have adopted a phrase — bareback sex — and included it in their biographic profiles as a way to meet like-minded men. Scarcest of all: the tiny but visible group of HIV-negative men are actually looking to get infected. "The potential to roll back the last decade's worth of advances is enormous," says Seth Kalichman, a professor at Georgia State University. "People are gambling with their lives."

Barebacking got a big boost from what has come to be called the "morning after" pill. The treatment, which really requires taking a potent combination of AIDS drugs for 28 days, may prevent HIV from taking root if taken within a few days of exposure to the virus. A six-year study of 710 health-care workers accidentally stuck by AIDS-infected needles found that the therapy reduced the odds of infection by 79 percent. Some private doctors have already begun prescribing the post-exposure drugs; the Centers for Disease Control is considering recommending them for gay men, rape victims and IV drug users. The morning-after regimen is making some AIDS warriors nervous — for good reason. Kalichman found that 26 percent of 327 HIV-negative men he surveyed this summer had already planned to use the post-exposure drugs, even though no one knows if they will work outside the strict confines of a hospital.

The barebacking world is most visible in cyberspace. When Brian (not his real name) stumbled into a barebacking chat room, he was told that hardly anyone practices safe sex now that HIV is as easy to treat as the flu. He started having sex without condoms, not giving AIDS a second thought — until he tagged along with a friend who was getting tested for HIV. Brian took the test, too. The result: HIV-positive. Brian is 14.

The phenomenon isn't confined to online chat rooms. AIDS groups around the country have begun to field questions about barebacking — when people bother to ask. Many organizations say calls to their HIV hot lines have dropped dramatically since 1995. "There have been times when I thought there'd be a certain freedom if I seroconverted. It would be done with," Hilburn says. "The biggest life adjustment would be that I'd have to take care of myself more: eat right, quit smoking, get enough sleep."

Hard as it is to understand, some gay men have unsafe sex because they want to get HIV — or at least skate close to the edge. Danger can be erotic, even the threat of contracting a deadly disease. "I've met two people who were turned on by the idea of being infected," says Mark, an HIV-positive AIDS activist and frequent barebacker in New York. "One guy kept telling me, 'Give me your virus. Give me your disease.' There's a phrase to describe these men: bug chasers.

Gay rights activists say there's a complex reasoning behind the eroticization of HIV. Like the pink triangle once used by the Nazis to brand homosexuals and now a sign of gay pride, gays have sought to transform HIV from a death knell to an empowerment tool. "If someone has AIDS or HIV, that kind of lionizes them. It's heroic, like fighting the battle," says an HIV-negative sophomore at the University of Florida, who recently gave up barebacking because he realized it was too dangerous. "When you get with someone who has HIV, it's like being with someone greater than you are." That attitude may be a perverse byproduct of the high-profile AIDS movement. "A lot of gay men feel out of place, put down, worthless. If you're HIV-positive, everybody is generous. There's a sense of community," says Michael, 35, a Dallas software engineer. Michael, a dedicated barebacker who has been HIV-positive for 12 years, recently posted an essay warning about the dangers of barebacking. But he defends the practice vigorously. "Some people hang glide or bungee jump," he says. "[Barebackers] just draw the line in a place that makes others uncomfortable."

Much of the discomfort comes from the gay community itself, where talk of limiting sexual expression is always inflammatory. Barebackers say the criticism aimed at them is unfair. People have always sought out unsafe sex, they maintain. Cyberspace has just helped them talk openly. Barebackers also argue that they're primarily HIV-positive men in search of positive partners, so no one is at risk. That line doesn't fly with health advocates. "If unsafe sex becomes perfectly OK for HIV-positive people, you've crossed the Rubicon," says Gabriel Rotello, author of Sexual Ecology: AIDS and the Destiny of Gay Men. "Sliding back into behaviors from the past will have catastrophic consequences." The deadly regression may have already begun.

Newsweek, September 29, 1997, Elizabeth Roberts in Miami and Frappa Stout in San Francisco.
“Long-term survivors are those who refuse to believe that AIDS is an automatic death sentence,” wrote singer Michael Callen, who died in 1994 after living with the disease for twelve years. Another long-term survivor, Rob Anderson of San Francisco, told the Los Angeles Times in 1993, “I think of these friends of mine who worried themselves into the grave... I truly feel that everything is influenced by the mind.”

This point of view is widespread within the gay community, and understandably so. People want to have a sense of control. You need not fear getting sick and dying if you can persuade yourself that only people with a bad attitude do so. In fact, it’s a basic human instinct to blame people for their own misfortune, whether it be sickness, poverty, failure in love, or whatever.

In reality, there’s precious little evidence that a person’s attitude, whether good or bad, directly affects the progression of AIDS. What is clear is that people who do get sick are made to feel worse by the suggestion that it’s their fault.

Over the last few years, biomedical research has begun to uncover the real reasons why some HIV-positive people fall ill faster than others. At least in part, it’s because there are genetic differences between individuals that influence their susceptibility to the virus. Much of this work comes from the laboratory of Stephen O’Brien at the National Cancer Institute. Researchers at the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center in New York, and at the Free University of Brussels, Belgium, have also been involved in the work.

To understand this research, you have to remember that chromosomes, the threadlike bodies that carry our genes, come in pairs. Thus, we have two copies of most genes, and these two copies may be identical or slightly different from each other. The NCI researchers studied genes whose job it is to produce the receptors, or molecular targets, to which the HIV particles attach when they infect cells of the immune system.

It turned out that the gene for one of these receptors, called CCR5, comes in two forms. One is a full-length gene that produces the normal receptors; the other is a shorter form lacking a crucial stretch of DNA: which does not produce functional receptors at all. If you have two copies of the normal gene, your immune cells will possess normal amounts of the CCR5 receptor; if you have two copies of the short gene, your immune cells will have no CCR5 receptors; and if you have one copy of each form of the gene, your immune cells will carry low, but detectable, levels of the CCR5 receptor.

The researchers checked the CCR5 genes in thousands of individuals, both HIV-negative and HIV-positive, and both well and sick. They found that individuals who carry two short genes, and therefore lack CCR5 receptors entirely, almost never become infected with HIV, even if they engage repeatedly in high-risk behavior such as unprotected anal receptive sex. (Unfortunately, no more than 1 percent of the overall population, and virtually nobody of African extraction, falls in this privileged group.) Individuals in both the other groups are susceptible to HIV infection, but they differ in the rate of disease progression. People who have one long and one short gene take two to three years longer to become symptomatic, compared with individuals (the majority in the population) who have two long forms of the gene.

Very recently, O’Brien’s group identified a second gene, known as CCR2, that also influences disease progression. Like CCR5, this gene is involved in the attachment of HIV particles to cells of the immune system. It now appears that just these two genes account for about one-third of all cases of long-term survival after HIV infection.

Other biological factors probably also influence disease progression. These include the particular strain of HIV with which a person is infected. Some strains are simply more aggressive than others. And prior drug treatments may also play a role. Some individuals who respond poorly to the newest drug combinations may have developed resistance to one or more of the drugs during earlier courses of therapy.

There’s a real hope that understanding the biological reasons why some people acquire HIV and fall sick more readily than others will lead to effective means of prevention and therapy for everyone. And this in turn will reinforce what we should already know, that we can all influence our own health, not through some notional mind-body connection, but by making wise choices about our lives and our health care.

There is more to life than increasing its speed.

— Ghandi

Simon LeVay, Ph.D., is well-known for his research on the "gay brain." He is the author of The Sexual Brain, City of Friends (with Elisabeth Nonas), and Queer Science (MIT Press, 1996) and the novel Albrick’s Gold (Richard Kasaak books). He is also the co-founder of the Institute of Gay and Lesbian Education in West Hollywood. He can be reached at:
<SLLeVay@aol.com>
Where in the World

Nature calling?

One of the first tour companies to sell eco-travel to the gay and lesbian market is Holbrook Travel. They are offering several tours in the balance of 1997 and into 1998.

Individual departures for Honduras are available whenever you like. Enjoy an 8-day excursion to Copan - a set of Mayan ruins, and an ancient city, Tela, on the Caribbean, and then to La Celiba, an active sea port. Prices from $768.

Exotic Costa Rica tours run Jan 3-15, Feb 6-18, Mar 14-26, and Dec 17-29, 1998. Each package includes 5 nights on the Pacific Coast at Quepos, one of Costa Rica’s most popular destinations for the gay and lesbian traveler. The price for this package starts at $869.

A 12-day Kenyan Safari, with departures on Jan 15, Feb 19, Mar 26, June 18, Jul 9, Nov 19, Dec 3 and Dec 17, includes a stop at the Ark, a lodge built next to a water hole for animal viewing; travel to the Samburu and Shaba game reserves; a great stop at the luxurious Mt. Kenya Safari Club, as well as Lake Nakuru, and a Masai village near the Masai Mara Reserve. Price is $1897 per person for the land portion. Finally, a Mountain Gorilla of Uganda departs Dec 30, 1997 and again on Jan 8, 1998. This eleven day tour includes hikes in the mountain forest reserves in search of the mighty gorilla, as well as game drives in the Queen Elizabeth Park in Ishasha. Price is $1757 per person for the land portion.

Points of interest

The daily cost of living in various world cities has been updated with the following: Moscow $534.20; Paris $443.12; Zurich $409.17; Frankfurt $342.91; London $337.18; Shanghai $312.10; Singapore $302.91; Buenos Aires $292.35; Vienna $285.04; Ho Chi Minh City $284.22; Jakarta $269.02; Bangkok $256.18; Budapest $223.36; and Caracas $210.94.

The largest hotel markets in the US are: 1) Las Vegas, 249 hotels, 101,500 rooms; 2) Orlando, 310 hotels, 85,800 rooms; 3) Los Angeles, 630 hotels, 78,900 rooms; 4) Chicago, 384 hotels, 9,000 rooms; 5) Washington DC, 360 hotels, 68,400 rooms; 6) Atlanta, 454 hotels, 67,300 rooms; 7) New York, 237 hotels, 63,300 rooms; 8) Dallas, 388 hotels, 46,500 rooms; 9) Anaheim, 352 hotels, 44,500 rooms; and 10) San Francisco, 302 hotels, 42,800 rooms

Atlantis Events


This well-respected gay and lesbian tour company is also offering a weekend escape to the Miami White Party Nov 27-Dec 1, 1997, with prices from $259 and up per person.

Viva Mexico!

There are still some spaces available at the ever popular RSVP Club at Puerto Vallarta. Prices start at just $695 pp and include all your food, booze and FAB-ulous entertainment at this real posh resort in gay friendly PV. (I know, my lover and I just got back from 10 days in the city.)

Bob De Loach, President of Apollo Travel, BG Tax and Accounting. The Electric Doctor, Apollo Real Estate, Lock Doc, is an insurance broker and still finds time to write novels for adults, take part in Community Theater, write this column, and be active in the community.

Helpline Training
Sunday, October 26
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Identity Office
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
3201 Turnagain Street, Anchorage
Telephone Candy at 337-2011.
Volunteer Spotlight

by Al Kaneta

The “Business Spotlight” column has morphed into another type of special feature with emphasis on people, rather than businesses. We welcome Al Kaneta as our new columnist, and encourage your comments. — Ruth Mathes.

The Identity Board has chosen Barbara Soule as “Volunteer of the Month” for September. Barbara, as her last name indicates, has a “soul” as big as all Alaska! Her many accomplishments excite one’s sense of adventure and stimulate the id.

She is both a lesbian and a mother, and was in wedded union for over 20 years. She raised four children, plus four foster children. Her son is a paramedic, one daughter heads a daycare center in Palmer, another daughter is a registered nurse in Palmer and the third daughter is a travel agent residing in Missouri. Her seven grandchildren bring her unbounded joy!

With passion, Barbara advocates a belief in the supernatural and is both a student and teacher of the occult, delving into pagan religions (Wicca), druids, native shamans and voodoo! Her inclinations are toward clairvoyance and the reading of tarot cards, plus a deep interest in the psychic world.

Her Olympian interests also include writing and poetry. Her first acknowledged “win” was taking first place for a piece of poetry written in the 4th grade, for which she won the grand amount of $5. While attending UAA, Barbara majored in fine arts and exhibited many of her sculpture pieces. She was also a member of the school’s repertory theatre.

Rummaging through a blur of memories, she reported that she was a founding member of the Women’s Resource Center in Palmer. When the Anchorage lesbian community presented its annual “Celebration of Change,” she contributed her many talents on stage with readings, singing and poetry recitations. She also served on the Board of the 15%, the not-for-profit organization which sponsored the annual event.

Barbara’s partner and true love is our own Candy Bonham.

BRITISH PARLIAMENT TO VOTE ON GAYS IN THE MILITARY

Tony Blair’s new government will allow a free vote in Parliament on overturning Britain’s military gay ban, reports BBC Radio 5 Live’s Out This Week.

The free vote means members of Parliament will be allowed to break from the party line and vote their consciences if they so choose.
What's Green, Comes Once A Year, And Equals $1,700

Design/Craft, Ltd. offers a wonderful selection of Gifts and Scandinavian Furniture that suits everyone's personal taste.

Your PFD At
DESIGN/CRAFT, LTD
440 E. Benson Blvd, Anchorage, Alaska
Hrs: Mon–Fri 10 to 7, Sat 10 to 6
Sun Noon to 5

Stop in and stretch your PFD today!

The follow up to the 1995 hit compilation of gay shorts: Four skilfully crafted stories of sexual discovery. A collaborative journey from adolescence to manhood, with all the wonder and fervor of coming-of-age and the passions and rage of coming out. Includes the Academy Award Winning "Trevor," a beautifully captured reflection of a 13-year-old boy's coming to terms with the undeniable fact that he is gay.

Now Showing
Call Theatre for Showtimes

PREMIERES
FRIDAY, OCT. 24
Call For Showtimes

Also Coming To The CAPRI
KICKED IN THE HEAD - OCT. 17
ULLE'S GOLD - OCT. 17
INTIMATE RELATIONS - OCT. 31

NOW OPEN!
Film Gallery at Cyra-no's
In Cyra-no's Bookstore - 417 "D" St.
An all new, intimate way to enjoy a great movie right in the heart of Downtown. Stadium Style seating with Plush Rocking Chair Loge Chairs. Dolby Stereo Sound and always good movies.
Weekdays open from 5pm, Sat., Sun. and Holiday's feature Matinee performances.

The Hollywood Canteen Coffee House
Next to the Capri - Open Daily Until 11 PM
Film Gallery Programs Subject to Change
Alaskas Reel Alternative MOVIELINE >> 561-0064
Stereotyping...Are We Guilty, Also?  
Dan Carter  
is a local gay activist

Stereotype: “...lacking originality or individuality.”

While all of us as gay, lesbian, transgendered and bi persons would agree that stereotypes used against us are a figment of someone’s unimaginative opinions. We would probably agree that believing in stereotypes is a sign of being uneducated. We also fight stereotyping every day that we are open about our sexual orientation. But do we always practice what we preach? What stereotypes have you heard? Which ones have you helped strengthen by passing it on to others? How do you confront stereotyping when it is being done in your presence.

I grew up in Lake City, Florida, a small tobacco town in the central part of the state just south of the Georgia border. I grew up in a segregated society with your status in life being based on race. I was told that blacks were beneath whites — regardless of the actual economic status or education of individuals of either race.

Stereotyping harms all of us! Not just the person or group that is being stereotyped as if they had no individual characteristics, it also harms the person holding the views. Stereotyping is not only based on race, religion, age, sexual orientation and other well-known features. It is also used to divide people over such things as being right-handed or left-handed, being classified as one of the “beautiful people” (versus one of the “others”), and financial status.

I’m sure you have heard more than enough stereotypes during your lifetime. Particularly, those that include you! Lesbians just need a good man (guys that say this, usually add “like me” to this comment) and they would become straight.....Southerners are all bigots and uneducated......Gay men are all after children......Black men want to have sex with white women......Christians hate the les/bi/gay/trans community......Americans are smarter/better looking/more compassionate/better fighters/etc. etc. than any other nationalities on earth.

How did we get into this? This is supposed to be a “melting pot” nation with many cultures, languages and people living together in harmony. It's not!

Some of the stereotypes are so absurd that most people recognize them as such and dismiss them. My favorite was a message one of our favorite ministers (yep, the one we love to dislike). He said gay men go to baths and have sex with hundreds of men a night. Well, he is talking about someone other than a 50 year old, out of shape, gay man such as myself. Actually, if someone could have sex with several hundred men in a night, I would think they would definitely not be part of any stereotype — other than the possibility of being included in an elite group of persons in the Guiness Book of Records.

Do we have racism, sexism, etc. in our own communities? I think we all agree we do. Do we confront or condone stereotyping in our community, while at the same time deploring the stereotypes used against us by others? Until we can “get over it,” it is difficult to see others doing likewise. What are we doing to educate within our own community of friends?

I recently spoke at Lamb of God Metropolitan Community Church for a National Coming Out Day service. I realized that Coming Out was not just a decision to accept and announce your sexual orientation. People come out in different ways all the time. Being both a gay person and a Christian, I also know it is not easy coming out as either...right-wing religious groups do not accept les/bi/gay/trans...and, some in our community can not accept that others can be les/bi/gay/trans and Christian.

Stereotyping of any kind is wrong. We are all individuals. Everyone deserves to be “judged” based on their actions and not on superficial qualities such as those discussed above or others which have nothing to do with the individual person. It is easy to lump everyone from a group into one category. It allows us to “know” them without having to meet them.

If integrating schools in my hometown accomplished nothing else, it made people look at a person as an individual and not as a group. Since most of us are “invisible,” we must continue to come out so others will know as us individuals and not as a stereotype.

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you!”
Stargazer Commentary

There is more than one way to die; coming out may prevent one kind of psychological and spiritual death. Attending the Pride Conference October 4, I sat in on a roundtable discussion, “Is there a Gay Culture?” One of the markers of entering the gay community is coming out. I was reminded of what internal pressures it took to come out of the closet for me. Being a procrastinator, that motivation was extreme. The situation for me came down to either to live or to die.

Through my childhood and into early adolescence, remarks my family made let me know that I was definitely different. At no time growing up did I ever hear anything about two people of the same sex being lovers. I was not a sexually aware child. When I had my first crush as a junior in high school, it was with a girl. I was so innocent and uninformed that I did not know that I was in love. One of my teachers, a man, made a remark to me about a poem that I turned in for a class assignment. He took me aside after class and said, “Barbara, this is a very good poem about a private matter. I think you should keep this one to yourself.” Naively I asked why. He looked at me strangely, did not say anything for a long time and then very slowly and thoughtfully responded. “How you feel about this person is a very private matter. Some people may not understand how innocent it is.”

Since I was expected to get married and have a family, I did just that. My boyfriend was my friend. On my wedding night I was a virgin and so was my groom. We discovered sex together. Over time, I noticed having more rapport with women. All my close friends were women. After being friends with a woman for awhile, I recognized being sexually attracted to that woman. This pattern repeated itself over and over again. I did not do anything about the sexual attraction, but it became increasingly stronger over time. When I was thirty years old, I finally heard the word gay and its definition. Immediately knowing that’s what I was. At the time, I’d been married ten years and just given birth to my fifth child. My reasoning was that I was a wife, committed to my partner and mother of four very young children who needed me too much. I’d been taught well. Women sacrifice everything for their families. It is a Southern tradition.

As my children needed me less and less, my partnership disintegrated as well. In 1975, Harriet Pearles, co-author of The National Organization of Women’s Consciousness Raising Manual, came to Anchorage for a women’s conference. I attended and admitted in one of the groups that I was attracted to women. A couple of weeks later, lesbianism was the topic for the women who continued with the work of the conference. The more honest I became verbally, the less I could come to terms with staying in my marriage.

Going back and forth between being a lesbian in the group and heterosexual in the rest of my life became excruciatingly painful. Finally, the distress was intolerable. Either I lived honestly or I felt that something would die inside of me. The sum total of what I would be is a lie. I got this mental image of being a hollow shell without a soul if I continued lying about who I really am. It was a frightening warning premonition of a psychological and spiritual death.

Something similar happens leading an alternative spiritual life. To keep growing and progressing spiritually takes rigorous honesty. The more honestly I live the more real I am, even as an imperfect being. Not being totally honest affects psychic and healing abilities. My abilities cloud and are not as sharp. It’s a signal and a warning to back track very quickly and clean up any misconceptions or errors.

I did die when I came out of the closet. My old dishonest self died. I am glad she is gone. Being a born again homosexual and an honest human being may be a spiritual concept incomprehensible by our society at large. I think that it is the premonition of psychological and spiritual death that forced many of us to come out of our closets. It is true that we are homosexuals and spiritually connected beings. It doesn’t matter what any church, particular brand of religion or spiritual following says — a lie is a lie and what is true is true. The month of October includes National Coming Out Day. Come out, live truthfully, be true to yourself and stay psychologically and spiritually alive.

Barbara J. Soule is a Reiki Master, a clairvoyant psychic, a lesbian artist, performer and writer.

If the big religious questions interest you, you should know where to come on Sunday morning:

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

Call the Anchorage Daily News Newsline (277-1500) and enter 5400 for topics and speakers.
3201 Turnagain Street: 248-3737 Informative message: 248-0715

You’ve got to jump off cliffs all the time and build your wings on the way down. — Ray Bradbury
Dear Love

Hot Chocolate Makes Me Horny

I know how lesbians get to the stage of bed death... ugh! What a terrible image. And why should I use a phrase Joann Loulan used anyway? She has decided to incorporate men into her sexual expressing. Now I don't see anything wrong with that, except if you're an author of several books on lesbian sex. Of course when the flame starts to flicker out with men, they don't keep hanging out with you because they love you, they split, or they stay and find another woman to flicker with, thus keeping the best of both realities: being loved and being sexed. As far as I can see, many gay men also take flight, searching for the next blazing fire.

Now many of you hold the erroneous stereotype that people over 50 or 60, or whatever your particular threshold, quit wanting sex. Au contraire. To prove my point, a funny, 60ish het woman in my writing group in Hermitage wrote a piece just this week called "Hot Chocolate Makes Me Horny." With the various pains and stiffnesses that we begin to feel, sex takes more inventiveness, and maybe we must settle for less vigorosity, but desire and loving and orgasm are still a part of life for the aging.

No, what takes us older ones to the brink of bed death is not lack of desire, it is lack of energy. Dear Love and I have been trying to have sex for several weeks now. We have one day a week off together. Last weekend we were in a motel in Kansas City with Lucy Frey at night... we had gone to RC for a writing conference. The previous weekend, I was in Texas visiting my old aunts. So we have missed two weeks of our only-day-together. Night time? Forget it. We both crawl home after a full day of work and 3 to 4 hours of commuting, stuff our faces and pass out. Even in my younger days, I have always preferred morning sex, but not at 5 AM which is our rising time.

So here we are, with aching "lions" not able to get it on. Today is our one day a week together. More than anything, we have to talk love talk, caring talk. We have to check each others' psyches for well being. Then we have to discuss bills. We have to plan ahead financially for trips and medication expenses. Dear Love has a dangerous and difficult job and she has to talk about it. I have a boring job that is intermittently exhausting and fulfilling. It doesn't take up much of the healing time.

Nothing squelches desire faster than talking about money. After recovering from it, we prepare for dinner with Lucy every Sunday night. We alternate cooking. Today is our turn and we cook and take the dinner to Lucy's. She is allergic to our cats; that's why she doesn't come here. It's just as well. Guess what else goes by the by when you commute 3 to 4 hours a day? You guessed it. Housecleaning.

And the cats. Believe you me, they are pissed that we are gone all the time. And needy? Try attempting to satisfy four touched-deprived kitties at once. And then we must get ready for work for the next week. I did some of that yesterday, but not enough.

And then there's writing deadlines; I have several right now, plus a million writing critiques to do. And friends who don't want much of my time and I want to keep on with them. Don't tell me it's a matter of priorities.

All this takes energy. All I really want to do is sit and stare, take a walk and then make love. And there are the things I am not doing. This is enough to make me really crabby. Which thing should I not do? I already gave up making a sugar-free pie for Lucy, cleaning the house, sitting and staring, and doing all my laundry at once. I can't finish doing budgeting. This has gotten us in trouble lately. I can't eliminate commuting or sleeping. By Friday, I'm whipped. Five to six hours of sleep isn't enough.

We did have some nice talking. And holding and kissing which can be done in moments here and there and is. And after Dear Love is through with her nap, I'm going to make overtures to her, and hope we aren't pressured by how soon we have to get to Lucy's. I think I'll go prepare the salad now so she has to do nothing but get up, love me, get dressed and go.

Dear Love still grins with her whole self upon seeing me for the first time of a day. I am always joyful to see her, touch her, hold her. Even just from morning until evening. There can be no bed death because there is no love death. Maybe we need a new name for the inevitable slowing of sexual activity that happens in any relationship. Any ideas? And maybe we should ask ourselves early on if there's something here we want to continue to have after that slowing comes. For me the answer is an unequivocal yes.

Who needs hot chocolate? Just writing about sex makes me horny.

by Karen Carlisle

Copyright, Karen Carlisle
President Clinton To Speak At HRC National Dinner

WASHINGTON — President Clinton will be the keynote speaker at the Human Rights Campaign's gala national dinner on November 8, the organization announced.

"President Clinton's participation at this event will be historic," said Elizabeth Birch, HRC's executive director. "The president's attendance will mark the first time a sitting president has participated at a gay and lesbian civil rights event."

Actress Ellen DeGeneres and her partner, Anne Heche, will also be attending the event. DeGeneres will also be accepting an HRC National Civil Rights Award for her historic and very public coming out last spring. DeGeneres' mother, Betty, was named by HRC as its new organizer's National Coming Out Project spokesperson.

The sold-out national dinner will take place at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Washington and will be attended by 1,500 guests.

The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that lesbian and gay Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.

ACT UP Members Appalled Clinton to Speak at HRC

WASHINGTON, DC — President Clinton will be the keynote speaker at the annual dinner of the Human Rights Campaign, a DC-based gay lobbying organization, at an event to be held on November 8, at Washington's Grand Hyatt. AIDS activists with the advocacy group ACT UP in Washington are disgusted that the HRC would honor Clinton, whose record on gay and AIDS-related issues has been appalling. Activists cite a long list broken promises and betrayals under Clinton, including: increased witch hunts expelling lesbian and gay service members from the US military under Clinton's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, signing into law the Defense of Marriage Act; signing into law travel restrictions and a ban on immigration for persons living with HIV; failing to implement the promised "Manhattan-project" to develop a cure for AIDS; firing Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders for promoting safe sex; refusing to lift the federal funding ban for life-saving needle exchange programs; failing to appoint a cabinet-level AIDS czar to lead the nation's war on AIDS; launching an assault on physicians who recommend marijuana to their patients; and the list goes on.

The record speaks for itself. "Cocktail parties don't save lives," states ACT UP Washington spokesperson Wayne Turner. "We've spent the past five years holding Bill Clinton accountable, trying to hold his feet to the fire. The HRC is simply providing political cover for a President who has failed people with AIDS. They do our cause more harm than good."

ACT UP Washington members have refused to disclose any plans for protests — except to say that activists will use the event as a forum to expose the Clinton legacy. Concludes ACT UP Washington's Steve Michael, "Bill Clinton has not earned the right to speak before gay and lesbians Americans. His five year record of lip service and lies speak loud enough."
It's a pleasure to serve the Community!

Call Lynn Thomas* today to discuss your
☑ financing & refinancing needs
☑ tax preparation
☑ self-directed tax-deferred retirement plan

for an appointment or more information call
263-0720 office; 248-2974 home

* formerly LaPerriere
GLSEN, GLAAD Praise In & Out

Comedy Sends Important Message About Discrimination

NEW YORK, September 17, 1997 — The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) and the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) praised the new film In & Out, stating that the movie brought audiences an important message about job discrimination facing the lesbian and gay community.

The Paramount film explores the media storm surrounding Howard Brackman (Kevin Kline), a small-town English teacher, being inadvertently "outed" when a hometown celebrity (Matt Dillon) wins an Oscar. The announcement comes as a great surprise to the townpeople, most of all to Howard and his fiancée (Joan Cusack). The story brings a gay tabloid reporter (Tom Selleck) to town to dig for the truth. Along the way, Howard struggles with his own self-identity as the townpeople play out and confront their own myths and stereotypes about gender and sexual orientation. Additionally, the film refuses to shy away from same-sex intimacy, and ends with the message of acceptance for Howard.

"In & Out explores stereotypes and assumptions many people still hold about the lesbian and gay community," observed Joan M. Garry, Executive Director of GLAAD. "With humor and wit, the film plays on these stereotypes to illuminate qualities all people share — the great expansion of our commonality, and how small the differences can be. Most importantly, In & Out portrays very real issues confronting our community: the prejudice and discrimination in the workplace and in our towns that lesbians and gay men face every day."

On September 18, the nationwide release date of In & Out, GLSEN hosted a press conference with former high school teacher Rawley Farnsworth, applauded as "one of the finest gay Americans" by actor Tom Hanks in his Oscar acceptance speech for the film Philadelphia in 1994. Kevin Kline's role in In & Out was inspired by Farnsworth, and his celebrated friendship with Hanks.

"As an organization that works with gay, lesbian and supportive straight educators, we know well the ignorance that has surrounded and clouded these issues," said John Spear, National Field Director for GLSEN. "We know of many cases where, unlike In & Out, educators may be reprimanded, censured, and even fired because of their sexual orientation. This movie helps send the message that gay teachers can be valuable role models, not just for actors preparing for a part, but for an entire town to learn about the importance of diversity, and what different people can bring to the table of the community in which they live."

Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) is a national organization that promotes fair, accurate and inclusive representation of individuals and events in the media as a means of combating homophobia and all forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation or identity.

With over sixty chapters, and a membership of over five thousand teachers, parents, and concerned citizens, GLSEN is the only national organization working to ensure that schools are places where all people are valued and respected, regardless of sexual orientation.

"I think more than anything Ellen is better off for coming out of the closet. That was my sole purpose in being on the show — to support my friend. And I think anything that pushes the envelope of consciousness is a positive thing. It will never be quite as closeted as it was before, because of Ellen. But just to be really clear, I think there have been a lot of people before Ellen, and there will be a lot of people after Ellen, and everyone that's ever come out has added to paving the way. It's a long, long road yet."

— Singer k.d. lang to E! online in early July.

---

The Alaska Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program

~ Clinical Breast Exam ~ Mammogram ~
~ Pap Test ~ Pelvic Exam ~
~ Lesbian Outreach ~
DON'T LET COST KEEP YOU FROM RECEIVING THESE POTENTIALLY LIFE-SAVING SERVICES.

~ For women 50 years of age and older the program will pay for a clinical breast exam and mammogram, a pelvic exam and a Pap test.
~ For women 40 to 49 years of age the program will pay for a clinical breast exam, a pelvic exam, a Pap test and may pay for a mammogram.

The Alaska Division of Public Health, Section of Epidemiology, now makes it possible for women who meet income eligibility requirements to receive cancer screening services AT NO COST!
Call 1-800-410-6266 for full details

---

Alaskana
RARE AND OUT-OF-PRINT BOOKS
4617 Arctic Boulevard
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
EUGENE SHORT
ABL 080231 (907) 561-1340
Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 1-6 p.m.
Lesbian Notions

by Paula Martinac

National Coming Out Day (October 11) has just passed us for the tenth time, and I continue to have mixed feelings about it. While it's imperative for people to come out, I'm skeptical of creations like a "day" for this or a "month" for that. They imply that during the rest of the year it's okay to forget about coming out or gay pride or whatever occasion is being celebrated. Too many of us, in fact, pick and choose when to be out and when to fudge or withhold the truth.

My partner and I are out to our families, our co-workers, our health-care providers, our neighbors, our landlord. But last summer, when a salesclerk at Macy's looked at us curiously and asked if we were sisters, we both just said no without any further explanation. It's easy to think of reasons — we were tired, we just wanted our T-shirts, and the sister question gets pretty old once you've heard it a couple of hundred times. Afterward, though, we both wished we had said something — "No, we're a couple" or "No, we're life partners" — even if all we got in response was a confused "Huh?"

Just recently, a lesbian acquaintance of mine indignantly pronounced coming out "an action you don't always have to take." You should tell your family, she allowed, but not everyone. When I pressed her for specific examples of when lesbians didn't need to come out, she was certain her doctor didn't really have to know. "It's not relevant," she reasoned. Wrong! I'm sure she'd want her doctor to have other facts, like her family medical history. So why withhold information about her sexuality that could impact the kind of health care she receives?"

Of course, I understand why fear keeps many adults in the closet. We have good reason to be afraid. We have virtually no rights. Employers can fire us. Landlords can evict us. Families can reject us. Thugs can kill us and get away with it. We can lose our children to our parents or straight ex-spouses. These things all weigh heavily on us as individuals and as a community.

But the problem with the "pick and choose" method of coming out is that it means our internalized homophobia is kicking in, the shame of not being "normal" that was instilled in us at an early age. Sometimes — when we don't come out to doctors, for example — our internal shame might wreak more damage than just the psychological kind. And if we don't get over our own fear and discomfort, we're actually colluding with our oppressors, helping to keep the attainment of lesbian and gay liberation somewhere off in the future.

There are members of our community who are real coming-out role models. Though I thought I knew quite a bit about coming out, over the past few months I've learned a number of valuable lessons from the lesbian and gay parenting community.

While working on a new book, I interviewed many lesbian moms and gay dads who are raising their children within openly queer families. Every day, they have to explain their families to doctors, teachers, baby-sitters, salesclerks, realtors — you name it. Even strangers on the street will ask about the baby's lesbian or gay parents either "Which one of you is the mother?" or "Where's the mother?"

For many of these parents, coming out has become almost second nature. "You just do it," one lesbian mother shrugged, admitting that, though she'd gotten used to it, it was never exactly easy and she was always a little afraid. When other mothers in her son's play group asked her, "What does your husband do?" she swallowed her fear and responded, "Well, my wife works for..."

A lot of these queer parents were members of the "pick and choose" school before they had kids, but parenthood has forced them to be ruthlessly honest. They know that anything less than total honesty will instill fear and shame in their kids, and the circle of homophobia will continue unbroken. "If you act secretive," another lesbian mother told me simply, "people think you're ashamed."

You don't have to be a parent to learn a lesson here. If we aren't ashamed, there's no time like today — not just on National Coming Out Day — to say so. If we continue to act ashamed, what future can the push for lesbian and gay rights possibly have?

Validation does not mean agreement. It means respect for similarities and differences. It is the cornerstone of good, solid communication. Without validation, communication is merely a power play.

— Janet Wojtitz

Anchorage Gay & Lesbian Helpline

258-4777

A community service of Identity, Inc.
PO Box 200070, Anchorage AK 99520
Casting Lines

by Ken Lovering

I'm sorry, but I always thought fishermen were rather dull. When I worked at a bookstore in a quiet rural town through which several rivers flowed, men used to come in and talk to each other in the stacks about fishing. They'd chat about casts and sinkers and hooks at great length as if they were two nerds discussing the quadratic equation. I would try to avoid their conversations but occasionally I'd get reeled in, so to speak, and I'd nod my head politely, yawning inside. Fishermen, it seemed to me, liked to talk. A lot.

They would talk about equipment and, of course, the one that got away. And occasionally their discussion would creep toward the existential, toward the thoughts brought on by solitude. But it seemed that they could never quite bring themselves to a full understanding of what that solitude evokes, what that stillness inside is trying to tell them as they wait for a prize catch to tug on their line — and so their conversation would softly fade into an awkward parting.

It is with all these experiences and ideas that I wait in a car with my husband Paul and his sister Susan while her husband Dan mingles in a seaside shack looking for the perfect bag of sandeels. "What's taking him so long?" Susan wonders.

"He's talking," I say. "Fishermen talk, despite that they might have three people waiting in the car."

Once on the beach, I begin to wonder how long our little outing is going to take. I'm not a sun worshipper, unlike Paul, and I can't stand the thought of sitting here all afternoon while the sun bakes me to a crisp. I have nothing to read, nothing to write on, except perhaps the sand.

I get up and meet Dan at the shoreline. "I want to try," I say.

Dan's quick casting lesson is punctuated by homoerotic banter: "Whip it out there!" or "Hold the pole like this." Soon, I work up to a good cast so the pleasure is in the whirring of the line as it flies outward and plunges into the blue. Soon I am casting and reeling in just to see how far out into the bay I can send the bait.

I eventually settle on a spot, cast, and wait, waves crashing at my feet. I rest the nub of the pole against my hip and watch the far end for some sign of a pull. The thin rod and its line-guiding rings, curved at a slight arc, are silhouetted against the late summer sun. This curve is normal, I'm told, caused by the weight of the sinker.

I wait some more. Soon, the rhythm of waves has me. They lap at my feet and loop seaweed through my toes. I find myself thinking of Hemingway, of Melville. Thinking that when something took my bait, it would be big and my line would race off its spool and I wouldn't be able to bring it under control until I sat on the beach and dug my heels in the sand, yanking and reeling until my hands bled.

And once, it almost happens. Some huge mother tugs hard and I reel to no effect. Dan coaches me. "Don't work it so much," he rants. "Let the fish rest. Okay now walk with it."

Though I'm reeling like crazy, I'm not bringing any line in, like in the nightmare where the hall you're walking down only gets longer.

In the end, it seems that a fish took my bait and ran with it, got loose from my hook, and somewhere along the way the hook got caught on something. That fish must have been huge! This big, at least.

I have Dan gouge another eel onto my hook and I cast out. Despite my first episode, it's still hard to know when something is biting or when it's merely the current pulling gently on my line. Soon the arc of my rod increases, pulled toward the sea as if pointing toward a catch. I'm not sure how, but I know this one is true. It feels like a massive concentration of muscle pulling me toward the bay. I reel it in a bit at a time and soon I can see it in shallow water, convulsing to get loose. It's about a foot long striped bass.

Once it is on the beach, I have no idea what to do with it. It flops around a few times, covering itself with sand. Then it is still. I know that if I touch it, it will flop around again and escape my grasp. Yet if I let it be, it will die.

Susan arrives and shows me how to pick it up so it won't wriggle from my grasp. When I inspect its face, it seems to do the same to me, its eye bulging outward. Its gills expand and contract over red fleshy matter that looks like lungs. I make comment that it seems to be breathing. "Actually, it's suffocating," Susan says, so I walk it to the water, lower it into the ocean, and release it.

My first fish, I think to myself, and a giddiness rises within me that I can't identify. I want another one — that's all I know. But I'm not sure why. Dan is struggling down the beach with a catch and I don't have the patience to wait for him to hook an eel for me. So I reach into the cooler and pull one out, cold and wet and slimy, from the plastic baggy. I secure the thin black hook between my thumb and forefinger, and gouge the blindly staring eel behind the eye.
Alaska Gay Community Center Remembered

Twenty years ago this month the Alaska Gay Community Center began operating in a house at 838½ 1 Street in Anchorage.

Regular organizational meetings had begun in early July, first at the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), then in the Log Cabin Church. In September 1977 organizational meetings moved to AGCC's own facility. The Center was staffed from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily.

The first ongoing activities were monthly membership meetings/potlucks and board meetings. Within the first year of operation was hosting: weekly meetings of the first gay AA in Alaska; a Saturday night Rap Group; a single parents' group; Young Alaska Gays; Slightly Older Gays; Gay Catholics/Episcopalians; the Imperial Court/Privy Council; a men's group; Friends of Gays; and the Knights of Malta. Films were being shown on Sundays and peer counseling training was occurring. The newsletter Gay Alaska started publication in January 1978. The Gay HotLine, begun by an organization called "Gay Information Services" in April 1977, was moved to the Center in the spring of 1978.

AGCC received its state charter in October 1977, but it took a year-long legal battle with the IRS to become the first Alaska gay organization to be recognized as a non-profit.

Other AGCC sponsored activities included Gay News Review weekly on KSKA, a bookstore and library, a speakers' bureau, and volleyball and skating parties. The name was changed October 1981 to include 'Lesbian' and in 1983 to Alaska Lesbian and Gay Resource Center. The organization has operated as Identity, Inc. since 1985. The Center was in its heyday when I arrived in this community at the end of 1978. Being involved in activities in the positive environment created by the people who made the Center has been for me an unsurpassed experience.

Steve Gingrich, onetime president of Alaska Gay Community Center, is a starving artist living near Eagle River.

F ken Freedman Counseling

566-1708

Individuals and Couples
...with special insight into issues for Gays ▼ Lesbians ▼ Bisexuals ▼ Transgender People ▼ HIV/AIDS

4060 Lake Otis Parkway, Ste. 205
Anchorage, AK 99508-5224
fken@servcom.com/ fax: 248-2421
URL: www.servcom.com/counseling

for a FREE catalog of lesbian & gay travel guides.
call 1-800-462-6654
or surf us at http://www.damron.com
More Climbing Lessons

Editor's Note: This is the second in a three-part article by Jen. The remainder will be published in the November NorthView.

Upon moving to Alaska, bears were an immediate source of tension. I had read enough first-person accounts in my Grandma's Reader's Digest to know that while being attacked by a bear might foster my budding writing career, it would not be a pleasant sensory experience. My fear of bears colored most of my outdoor activities for my first few years in Alaska. The only exception were midweek softball games. I decided that my chances of being stalked by a bad tempered grizzly while I rounded third base were probably slim. After all, Anchorage was the home of over 250,000 people and three K-Marts.

Anytime I ventured outside the city limits, however, imaginary bears appeared around every corner. My fear left me distracted and drained. One weekend camping trip, I and a group of friends had pitched tents in the flat plain near a glacial river. The rushing river sounds were loud and unfamiliar but eventually I'd fallen asleep. Only to awaken several hours later to a growling sound that could only mean one thing. My heart began to pound, adrenaline coursing through my veins. My mind spun as I raced through my limited alternatives. I was about to awaken my sleeping tent-mate when I realized that the growling noise wasn't an ornery grizzly about to rake his clawed paw through the top of my tent; it was my snoring friend. Took me hours to get back to sleep.

Eventually, however, I began to grow more comfortable in the wilds. I realized that the bears were few and far between. And the ones who did occasionally cross my path wanted nothing to do with me. Since the feeling was mutual, the bear encounters generally worked out fairly well. And as a result, I came to appreciate that my fears are not constant. They may limit me at any given moment, but they don't define me. In other words, my bear phobia could evolve into a healthy respect for the large hairy ones.

At this point, I'm too close to the summit to see the top, but I know that it isn't far away. Mary and I have been hiking, climbing, clawing our ways up this mound of earth for almost six hours now and I'm looking forward to balancing the soles of my Salmons on the peak. I am also looking forward to safely making my way back down this oversized pile of rock. Gray clouds are rapidly forming in the valley on the southwest side of the peak and I'm starting to worry that our descent will be wet and foggy. A prospect which quickly inspires me to begin climbing again.

At 6,400 feet above sea level, Pioneer Peak isn't the tallest mountain in the Chugach range, but it is one of the more imposing ones. At least for Anchorageites who routinely drive by it on their trips north to interior Alaska, as I have for years. Looking up and saying to myself and anyone else in the car who'd listen, that I'd love to climb Pioneer some day.

But as so many other things, dreams often get prioritized. Behind mowing the lawn, hiking an easier peak, catching up at the office. Until later they get filed at the bottom of a stack of paper in a cardboard box like letters from distant friends to which I always planned to respond. I suppose climbing Pioneer had suffered a similar fate in my life. Filed away in a box under the subheading of "things I would like to have done." Then an unexpected williwaw, that unpredictable wind that blows down the face of mountains, scattered my careful piles. The disorder gave me an opportunity to revisit some of those dreams and ultimately led me here, to this rocky precipice above the tree-line.

Last year I left Alaska. Moved away from Anchorage to be with Kathryn who had started a Ph.D. program back East. Said good-bye to my job, my friends and this place and walked away. I convinced myself that it was time to leave. That it was time to move home to the east coast where tomatoes wouldn't cost $3.99 a pound and the sun would rise in December. That my relationship mattered enough to leave a place I loved. But Kathryn had other plans. And within months I was living on my own in a foreign land feeling as if the rug had been snatched out under me. And my boxes. I eventually purchased some brown packing tape, wrapped them back up and shipped them home to Alaska. But not before I had taken enough time to learn a few things. About expectations. About risk. I returned to Anchorage with a newfound appreciation for the mountains and friendships that I had taken for granted when I first lived here, as I whirled through my days trying to get somewhere else.

Jen Kohour, local writer and hiker, is looking forward to seasons filled with both.

The world is too dangerous for anything but truth and too small for anything but love. — William Sloan Coffin
Deep Inside Hollywood

Ellen Rocks the Emmys

An otherwise uninspired Emmy telecast was made more interesting by the presence of the ever-amusing Ellen DeGeneres. Capping nearly a year of sensational media attention, Ellen took the stage to accept the Emmy for Writing on a Comedy Series for her work on the coming-out episode of “Ellen.” Her oft-quoted dedication of the award to teenagers who think there’s something wrong with them because they’re gay was the high point of the evening. Backstage at the awards show, Ellen told the assembled reporters that the new episodes of her sitcom are “hilarious” and promised that “it will be a show that people will talk about, to say the least.” Ellen also mentioned that her character’s sexuality would definitely be explored more fully in the new season of her sitcom, which will surely create more controversy and publicity. However, attendees of the post-Emmy party didn’t need to wait until Tuesday night to get a shocking eyeful of the newly open star. At the post-Emmy party, Ellen and her partner Anne Heche (while hanging out with close pals Demi Moore and GOP favorite Bruce Willis) made it clear to everyone that the rumors of their imminent breakup were greatly exaggerated. However, their great affection for each other did not stop Hollywood’s favorite lesbian couple from doing a little wife-swapping at the party. Much to the delight of the photographers around them, Ellen and Bruce suddenly began kissing, while Demi and Anne did the same. There is no word yet on whether or not the four actors will follow up their party shenanigans with a very ’90s remake of the ’70s classic Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice.

Gay Bashing Gets Elementary

Back-to-school has many traditions associated with it, but this year, the far right has added homophobia to the curriculum. The conservative organization Concerned Women for America (CWA) has launched a back-to-school protest against the documentary It’s Elementary — Talking About Gay Issues In School. The film is a thought-provoking series of interviews with elementary school children and their teachers discussing their views about homosexuality. In a recent fundraising letter, the CWA called the documentary an “abomination” and a “militant homosexual propaganda effort.” This latest attack from conservatives follows other similar protests from Focus On The Family, the Family Research Council, and the Phyllis Schlafly Report. Debra Chasnoff and Helen Cohen, the team behind the documentary, are the parents of elementary school children themselves and find the protest again the film disturbing. “We, too, are concerned women.” Chasnoff has stated in a written response to the protest. “The feedback we have been getting from educators and parents across the country is that, in fact, It’s Elementary is a highly effective resource for helping schools prevent violence, support all families, and affirm all children so that they can thrive academically.” Working with the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), Chasnoff and Cohen are now offering free copies of the documentary on videotape to any public school board member or school district superintendent so they can judge the message of the documentary for themselves.

Porn to be Wild

With the hit play Making Porn doing strong business on tour, and the new porn-themed Boogie Nights hitting movie theaters, there is a sudden resurgence of the porn industry in more mainstream entertainment. Hopping onto this latest trend is a new film by gay sci-fi director Sam Irvin entitled Male Fraud. The film stars former Playgirl centerfold Dirk Shafer, who last appeared on-screen in his mockumentary Man Of The Year about his experiences as a secretly gay sex object. Male Fraud is the story of a closeted, struggling actor (Shafer) who finally lands a great job on TV, only to be immediately fired when they discover he had done gay porn. Shafer’s character then claims that the porn star is actually his evil twin, and married to a straight former porn actress played by Julie Brown (Earth Girls Are Easy). The comedy will also star Paul Bartel (The War Of The Roses, Scenes From The Class Struggle In Beverly Hills). Alexis Arquette as an artist who creates dildos, and RuPaul as “Fi Fi LaDouche” a drag queen porn director modeled after (you guessed it) Chi Chi LaRue. Director Irvin is hoping to lure several adult film actors to play themselves in the movie.

The film is expected to go into production this fall, with release planned for the fall of 1998. In the meantime, Irvin will be completing a film project for Showtime titled The Orb, about a mysterious alien object that cures terminal illnesses like cancer and AIDS but which the government wants for its own purposes.

Miss Paige Turner can be reached by e-mail at <paige@planetout.com>.

The will to disbelieve is the strongest deterrent to wider horizons.

— Hans Holzer

Sylvia L. Short
Attorney and Counsellor at Law

705 West 47th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
Telephone (907) 562-4992
An excellent front-page story of the Sunday, September 21 San Francisco Chronicle feature James Green, a leader of the female-to-male (FTM) transgender community. Below a full quarter-page shirtless picture of the well-built, bearded Green, the headline “A Self-Made Man,” is followed with the lead-in, “When James Green was a little girl, he saw Mary Martin play Peter Pan and knew right away he could do a better job.”

Staff writer David Tuller says that Green “wants people to understand one thing about masculinity: It has more to do with a man’s inner life than with his genitals.” Tuller takes pains to explain how FTMs have struggled for visibility even within the transgender community, and the difference between “sex” (“the biological category represented by the genitals”) and “gender” (“the psychological identity that nestles wherever a person’s most intimate sense of self resides—in the mind, or in the soul or in the heart”).

Two inside pages included 9 photos and a story which alternated between descriptions of Green’s life and discussions of the logistics and politics of FTM surgeries and the struggle for transgender rights, Tuller represents a full, well-rounded group of perspectives on Green and the issues of FTM transgender people.

To feature an article on FTMs in a major daily newspaper is exceptional. Please commend the San Francisco Chronicle for an outstanding and sensitive feature on an often overlooked segment of our community. Contact: Daniel Rosenfeld, San Francisco Chronicle, 901 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-2988, fax: 415.512.8196, e-mail: <chronicles@sfgate.com>.

Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation promotes fair, accurate and inclusive representation in the media as a means of challenging homophobia and all forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation or identity.

If you do not tell the truth about yourself you cannot tell it about other people. — Virginia Woolf
The Amazon Trail

The Gay National Guard

by Lee Lynch

I can't believe it's over. Is it over? No, it'll never be over. But it feels, for the moment, as if the organized attacks on gays have at least receded with the current waning strength of the right.

Not that I'm putting my guard down. I may not be marching on Washington, or playing Paul Revere in my columns, but I never did and never will belong to that nonchalant crowd that seems to think we're home free.

Gays are a despised minority. Always have been, maybe always will be. There have been eras like the 1920s when we're more accepted by parts of heterosexual society. Then there are eras, like the early and mid-1990s, when we're viewed as evil incarcinate.

Of course we don't change. Some of us are sick, some of us well-adjusted, all of us caught up in the same daily struggles and joys of life as non-gays.

It's public opinion that changes. Salem witch hunts, Spanish inquisitions, Communist purges, American Puritanism. When these waves sweep over a society, we bear the brunt of them and survive, most of us.

For the moment I feel as if I've survived. At the local lesbian potluck Saturday night I felt like I was at a celebration. There was no political talk, there were no recent horror stories. Someone announced a breast cancer walk, but otherwise we were there simply to enjoy one another.

It felt like the siege was over.

Every lesbian and gay man is an activist, of course. At fourteen and fifteen, before Suzy and I ever heard of civil resistance, we were holding hands on the street and defending anyone to stop us. I was wearing men's clothes at the risk of arrest and beatings. Everyone I knew had fake ID so we could be with our own kind in the bars.

That's just the way it was.

Today, there are scads of gay characters on TV. And Lea DeLaria, who many dykes find offensive, is the out darling of Broadway. Even Minnie Mouse doesn't back down when attacked for her gay support. Anything goes.

I read that Candace Gingrich's brother has lost control of his troops. That the Christian Coalition had a conference where the speakers repeated over and over that they're still a strong entity, bearing false witness even as their followers dwindle.

Diana, Princess of Wales, is mourned by the publicly gay figures she befriended. Ellen DeGeneres and Anne Heche act like it's natural to be affectionate with one's beloved at a presidential do. The police and media launch an enormous manhunt for a gay murderer of gays, just like we deserve to live.

Okay, maybe it's just a lull. I'm not going to start wearing a tie to the post office, but my car is wearing her positive "YEP" bumper sticker and rainbow strip. When we donated to the library rummage sale, they displayed our obviously gay books without raising an eyebrow.

Our deflector shields are down today. It's a good time to enjoy the relative absence of oppression. To relax after years of battle.

And to nurture the infrastructure that was forced on us. Those monthly community potlucks, film nights, archives, newsletters, annual picnics, internet groups and pride celebrations are our gay national guard. The Victory Fund, the Human Rights Campaign, GLAAD, PFLAG and all the rest are our national Energy Departments and Treasuries. Activists are quietly educating and coalitioning by integrating the Senior Centers and hosting multi-cultural festivals.

Never again will a couple of baby dykes be alone in their defiance. Maybe they're not safe. Maybe it'll never be completely over. For sure we're stronger and safer and freer than we've ever been before.

Extra! Extra! Extra!

Identity's NorthView is now being sold at Metro Music & Books and Borders Books & Music.

In Fairbanks find us at Into the Woods Bookshop Tell your friends!
My Queer Life

In & Out Rage

by Michael Thomas Ford

I am not a big fan of going to the movies. Being locked for ninety minutes in a small, sticky room with people who I do not know and who insist on eating things that crackle does not make me happy. Despite these misgivings, I was recently coerced into going to a screening of the Kevin Kline film In & Out. Much to my surprise, I thoroughly enjoyed it. Sure, there were some holes in the plot, but who cared? It was fun seeing Kline and Tom Selleck smooch (Tom was one of my first homo fantasies), and Debbie Reynolds was priceless. As far as I was concerned, a good time was had by all.

Later in the day I went online to check my e-mail. Because I have a novel due and nowhere near completion, this, resulted in an hour or so spent looking at useless information on the Internet. Somewhere in my wanderings I stumbled upon a folder devoted exclusively to people's thoughts on In & Out. Curious as to why such a thing would exist, I read through the postings.

To my surprise, nearly all of them were filled with anger and condemnation of the movie. The posters didn't like the "stereotypical" portrayal of gay men. They didn't like the fact that Tom Selleck's character wasn't entirely sympathetic. They didn't even like the fact that the Village People were on the soundtrack.

There was a lot of finger-pointing and blaming going on. People were mad at non-gay Kevin Kline for doing the role. They were mad at gay writer Paul Rudnick for "selling out the community." They were mad at the gay people who laughed along and at the straight people who laughed with them. Or, more precisely, at them. Because that was the problem everyone seemed to be having — we were being made fun of. "Why," wrote one fellow who pretty much summed up the tone of the messages, "can't Hollywood create a movie that depicts what the essence of being gay is instead of making us all look silly."

I'll tell you why — because the essence of being gay is being silly. I don't care if you don't like it. It's true. There's no deep cosmic secret about being gay. There's no arcane experience embedded deep within the heart of our gay souls just waiting to be revealed to the world. What being gay means is that we have a way of looking at life that is different from the way other people who do not go through life as gay people do. And for most of us, that means recognizing that the most positive way to deal with everything the world throws at us is to laugh at it.

Unfortunately, there seem to be a lot of queers who want our differences to go away, who want us all to be "just like everybody else" because then we'll be taken seriously. Sorry. I for one am really tired of gay people who use the word "stereotypical" when what they really mean is "what we're afraid of looking like." The word is almost always used to describe a gay character who is less than super-butch, does drag, or likes Barbra Streisand. If the "stereotypical" character is a lesbian, she has short hair, plays softball, rides a motorcycle, and could easily pass as one of the boys.

I hate to break it to you, folks, but there are a lot of "stereotypical" gay people running around. Even those of you who think you aren't like that probably have more of the Barbra queen in you than you think you do. And you know what — that's a great thing. These little in jokes are one of the things that bind us together as a group of people with common reference points. Why do you think it's oh-so-easy to play Spot the Queer or Pin the Tail on the Dyke when you stroll through the mall or dine out at your local Denny's? Why do you think we can look at the ten-year-old boy who (as my nephew does) sews his own shirt?
clothes and sings a flawless “Evergreen,” and nods knowingly at one another. Like it or not, most of us in the great rainbow scout troupe are just, well, somehow different from the other kids.

But still some of us persist in thinking that it’s other people who look gay or act gay or, well, are gay. I have a friend who for a time lived on New York’s quintessentially gay Christopher Street. He was so ashamed of his address, and of the teenage drag queens who frequently hung out in front of his building, that he took a post office box so that no one would see his street address on his checks or on his mail and “think he was a faggot.” I hate to break it to him, but despite the fact that he tries his best to distance himself from his swishy brothers, he doesn’t exactly blend. But he still thinks no one knows about him. And from the uproar we hear every time Hollywood gives us yet another “stereotypical” gay character, he isn’t alone.

Again, I have news for those of you who want gay characters to be just like everyone else. Yes, the Kevin Kline character in In & Out is a bit limp-wristed and prissy. Yes, he goes to the mat for La Barbra (at his bachelor party no less). Yes, he walks like a queen and talks like a queen and even kisses like a queen. That’s why he’s so wonderful. We can watch him and laugh at everything he does because we know that even if we aren’t all like him, there’s a bit of him in all of us and a bit of each of us in him. He might not be in on the joke at first, but once he is, he realizes that he’s fabulous the way he is and he doesn’t care what the straight folks think (and they accept him, anyway, because in addition to being gay he’s a great guy). There are a whole bunch of uptight queers out there worried about what straight people will think of them if they act “too gay” who could learn something from him. And as for those of us who might just be “stereotypical” dykes and fags, I say rage on.

Youth Activism

Earlier this year, a ten-year-old girl from a lesbian family named Sol Kelley-Jones gave testimony at a legislative hearing on a bill prohibiting same sex marriages in Wisconsin. At the time, she had no idea what a difference telling her story would make.

The next morning, Sol’s story was the lead in articles on the front page of papers across the state, which also told how hundreds of people from across Wisconsin had come to tell their own stories. In speaking out about their lives, she and her moms brought a human face to the issue of how the proposed legislation (and the hatred that was behind it) would hurt her and other children in lesbian and gay families.

Sol’s activism took another form a month later when she conducted a survey of attitudes toward gay men and lesbians at her elementary school. Her survey’s results were eventually considered by both the Madison school board and the State Superintendent of Schools.

In July, she was named Madison’s “Ally of the Year” this summer at the annual dinner of our LGBT service agency, The United. Sol and her moms, Sunshine Jones and Joann Kelley, also proudly marched at the front of Madison’s LGBT Rights and Pride Parade.

Sol’s activism, at such an early age, is symbolic of the difference we can make as individuals and families in speaking out about our lives. In recognition of her contributions, we’ve prepared a special website “scrapbook” for her. It documents her testimony, and the reaction in the news media. It also contains a copy of her school survey, and other information about her and her family. Eventually, we hope to establish links to other resources on the Internet relating to children in gay and lesbian families, gay and lesbian youth, and education issues.

Sol’s website can be found at <http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Heights/6502/>. Please use the e-mail response links to let us know what you think.

In the several weeks since her site has been online, Sol has heard from people from all across the country who’ve been inspired by her activism.

<jlquinlan@msn.com> Madison, Wisconsin
"Quality of Life is our Goal"

725 Northway Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508

(800) 262-8055  279-8055  (Fax) 279-8054

Karen Marcey  Danita Fischbach
Registered Pharmacist  Registered Pharmacist

✚ Home Infusion Services ✚ Free Delivery
✚ Oral Prescription Drugs ✚ One-on-one counseling
✚ Insurance Billing  in a confidential
  environment

A quiet, confidential, knowledgeable environment to get prescription medications and information. Information available on HIV/AIDS medications, clinical trials, parallel tract drug protocols, indigent-patient assistance programs and insurance billing.

QUESTIONS WELCOME.
PFLAG Demonstrates at Disney World

ORLANDO, FL (Reuters) - Hundreds of parents with gay and lesbian children took to the streets near Walt Disney World to thank Disney for sticking to its guns in the face of boycotts from anti-gay conservatives.

Sporting signs that read “Christians for Disney”, “Values for every family” and “M-I-C G-A-Y”, members of Parents, Family and Friends of Gays and Lesbians wrapped up their four-day national conference with a demonstration along Orlando’s tourist packed International Drive.

“We came out against the Southern Baptist Convention boycott when it was announced this summer and now we are doing it in a very visible way,” PFLAG President Nancy McDonald of Tulsa, Oklahoma, said. “We have a lot of parents and grandparents here who want to make sure that their sons and daughters and grandchildren have the same rights as everyone else, and we’re here to applaud Disney,” she said.

Since the Southern Baptists voted to boycott Disney and its subsidiaries, including the ABC television network, other conservative religious groups have joined in. Although gay rights are not the only issue, Disney’s decision to extend benefits to homosexual partners and its tolerance of an unofficial “Gay Days” celebration at Disney World have drawn the most ire.

The demonstrators included a number of Southern Baptists, who like Kay Holliday of Norman, Oklahoma, see an opportunity for reconciliation with the Baptists. “Our son came out to us when he was 16 and it was a very difficult time for us,” Holliday said.

“Our minister and our church were so supportive of us as a family. You know, when you’re meeting people one on one and you’re talking about your families and how much you love them, there’s common ground, and we look for common ground all of the time.”

Walt Disney World spokesman Bill Warren said the theme park did not take part in PFLAG’s national convention, which was not held at a Disney hotel, and had only one word for the groups endorsement: “Thanks.”

A PFLAG news release said the Washington, D.C.-based group was formed in 1973 and its membership included some 70,000 households in all 50 states.

INT’L GAY TRADE FAIR IN HOLLAND

The Netherlands’ annual Homo Expo, staged this year in the southern border city of Eindhoven October 3-5, attracted thousands of Belgian, Dutch and German gays with exhibits on “lifestyle, culture, associative life, and entertainment.”

More than 100 stands focused on furniture, decorating, travel and clothing. Others showcased artists and gay organizations.

Copyright, Reuters 1997.
Warm Up the Winter

Celebrate the Beauty of Men with the 1998 AIDS Benefit Calendar

Jeff Palmer's 1998 AIDS Benefit Calendar will be available in general release beginning in early October at gay and gay-friendly bookstores and other retailers, or via mail order. Stunning black and white photographic images are the hallmark of this best selling male nude calendar. The 11 x 22 month-at-a-glance calendar features thirteen photographic images including powerful and beautiful images of men alone and men with men - sensual and erotic, but non-sexual - all celebrating the beauty of men and male couples. Proceeds from the sale of the calendar are distributed to agencies across the US that provide direct services to people living with HIV and AIDS. More than $400,000 has been distributed since the first calendar issue in 1990. For additional information, contact Joe Pascale at 760-774-8360 or visit the AIDS Benefit Calendar website on the internet at <http://www.jeffpalmer.com>.

To receive the 1998 AIDS Benefit Calendar, please send $13.00 plus $3.00 shipping and handling to:
AIDS Benefit Calendar
P.O.Box 230034
Encinitas, CA 92023-0034

It's okay to be fat. So you're fat. Just be fat and shut up about it. — Roseanne

THE WAVE
3103 Spenard Rd Anch., Ak. 99503 661-9283

The Happening Homosexual Halloween Home!

Costume Contest! More Drag Queens than you can shake a broom at!
Friday, Oct. 31st at 8pm
Investitures! Saturday, November 1st

Identity, Inc. at its celebrated Fourth Friday Potluck & Social. Bring soup, salad, entree, deviled eggs, hors d'oeuvres, fruit, bread, dessert, chips, dip, pizza, etc. Identity provides the drinks: tea, coffee, punch. Admission is free, but we cheerfully accept donations. Donations for the 4A's food bank are cheerfully accepted by The Food Fairie; why not bring a couple of cans or boxes of food with you.

Date: Friday, October 24 (Not Oct. 31)
Time: 6:30 p.m. doors open/socialize; 7:00 p.m. dinner; 7:30 p.m. announcements & program
Place: Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 3201 Turnagain Street
Program: Gay Drama with Out North Theater.
Youth Book Available

In mid-October, William Morrow & Co. will publish *The Shared Heart: Portraits and Stories Celebrating Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Young People*. The book, and the traveling exhibit that inspired it, feature compelling photographs of lesbian, gay and bisexual youths and powerful first-person accounts about the challenges of growing up gay. The goal of *The Shared Heart* is to let gay young people know they are not alone, and to better educate teachers, parents and fellow students about the issues present for those growing up lesbian or gay.

The young people featured in *The Shared Heart* come from a diverse range of racial, economic and family backgrounds. They are class presidents, athletes, artists, students and siblings. The book will help other lesbian and gay youths navigate through adolescence, letting them know they are not alone, and that the future holds opportunities for love and understanding. *The Shared Heart* also will educate parents, teachers and fellow students about the need for tolerance and acceptance.

The project has been endorsed by author Judy Blume, Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, Elton John, Congressman Barney Frank, singer Emily Saliers of the Indigo Girls, photographer Duane Michaels and others. It has also been praised by countless school principals, students, teachers and government officials.

*The Shared Heart* will be officially launched at an event sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign in Washington, DC in conjunction with National Coming Out Day, October 11.

The IDPR Group, 596 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02118
(617) 437.8493.

Love never dies a natural death. It dies because we don’t know how to replenish its source, it dies of blindness and errors and betrayals. It dies of ill-will and wounds, it dies of weariness, of witherings, of tarnishings.

— Anais Nin
Fairbanksan

Further North in the Heart of Alaska

Snow has fallen telling us the season has really changed. Time for indoor activities and visiting with friends.

Halloween Parties

At press time plans have not been solidified, but information can be found by calling either the IAA at 452-2222 or AGLA at 455-7352.

PFLAG Fairbanks

August meeting at Into the Woods: Nine people enjoyed a great cup of coffee and the cozy meeting room at Into the Woods Bookshop/Coffeehouse. We will continue meeting there the 3rd Sunday of the month from 4:00 to 5:30 pm. Look for PFLAG literature, books, and videos for checkout, rental, or purchase at the bookshop located at the University end of College Road. We had a look at PFLAG’S 15-year journey in an inspiring 20-minute video, Love in Action. PFLAG has come a long way in such a short period of time: from a few angry mothers in 1981 to 70,000 members in 1997 (including a national staff of 16) doing PFLAG work of support, education, and advocacy in both person-to-person ways and testifying in national committee hearings.

President Nancy Kailing handed out PFLAG National’s summary and perspective on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 1997. Job discrimination protection is needed! In all but 11 states, a person can be fired from a job simply on the basis of sexual orientation or supporting gay friends and family. (CA, CT, HI, MA, ME, MN, NH, NJ, RI, VT, WI, & DC have laws which prohibit workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.)

Agenda: KUAC (Channel 9) Begins Fall Programming.
Two Sundays in October KUAC will have programs of special interest to PFLAG members and friends. Both begin at 11:00 pm. so I hope you have figured out how to program your VCR to record! October 12th — When A Kid Is Gay and October 19th — Into the Life. (Into the Life will be featured every other month.)

Help Needed! PFLAG President in Graduate School!
Nancy Kailing, PFLAG Fairbanks President, is now a graduate student in Community Psychology. This will be an exciting challenge. If PFLAG is to continue to be active in our community we need more active leadership. Please come to our meetings or call with ideas (Nancy Kailing: 4SP-FLAG and leave a message).

Q Net AK, Alaska’s Gay and Lesbian Information Source

Notice the word ’Interior’ is missing. Q Net AK has been serving the resource and community link needs for the state for well over a year. Many new links and information are now available, and more planned. Stop by if you haven’t been there lately, and link your community friendly business or homepage. <http://www.mosquitonet.com/~qnetak> or e-mail to <qnetak@mosquitonet.com>.
New AIDS Drug Showing Significant Success In Tests
by M. A. J. Mckenna

The first of a new class of AIDS drugs that prevent the virus from reproducing has shown in preliminary tests that it can reduce HIV in patients' blood to below-detectable levels. In papers presented in San Francisco and Baltimore, researchers from the University of Alabama-Birmingham announced significant success with an initial small trial, the first in humans, of the drug T-20.

Sixteen volunteers, divided into four groups, tested the new drug, with each group receiving a different dose. All 16 patients had relatively low levels of immune-system function (CD-4 cell counts greater than 100) and rising levels of HIV in their blood (more than 10,000 copies of the virus per milliliter). Most of them had been treated unsuccessfully with other AIDS drugs.

In the group of four that received 100 milligrams of the drug intravenously twice a day, HIV levels in the bloodstream were undetectable within seven days and remained so for 14 days. Within seven days of stopping the drug, HIV in the blood returned to its former level. "It is a very exciting proof of concept," said Dr. Michael Saag, director of the outpatient clinic at UAB's AIDS Center, who presented the findings in Baltimore at the Institute of Human Virology's annual meeting. "Even though we have only treated 16 patients, we have proof that this creates an antiviral effect that may be comparable to protease inhibitors," currently the most powerful AIDS drugs available.

The new drug is a synthetic copy of a protein fragment that exists naturally in HIV. It is part of an envelope protein called gp41, which forms the docking mechanism the virus uses to draw close to and penetrate a cell. When given in the proper concentration, Saag said, the synthetic protein binds to the site on the virus' surface that the natural protein would have filled; blocking that site prevents the virus from fusing to the cell it would have used to replicate itself.

In contrast, all three classes of the eleven AIDS drugs now on the market target the virus once it is inside a cell by disrupting its reproduction or preventing the replicated virus from being released. "The problem is that, if people fail to respond to any drug in those classes, they often develop cross-resistance to all the drugs in the same class," Saag said. "So there is a strong need for new agents that have entirely different mechanisms of action."

The compound was developed by Trimeris, a company founded by researchers from Duke University. UAB was the drug's only testing site.

The next step, Saag said, is to produce enough of the drug to launch a second trial, probably in November. Goals will be to administer it to more patients over a longer period, to fine tune the effective dose and to test T-20 in combination with existing AIDS drugs. It probably will take two years to get the drug to market, Saag said.


"I had some concerns about the role. Not like, 'Oh my God! Can I kiss a guy?' concerns, but 'Can I kiss a guy on screen in a way so that it will look nothing like a studio stunt?' You have to realize that kissing scenes in general are never easy. At one point in the film, it is apparent that Kevin Kline's character needs a wake-up call. It is during that point that I just grab him and plant my lips on his. The actual scene took two days to film. With any scene that requires an actor to emit any kind of emotion, there is always a little tension or anxiety. I'm sure I was thinking about the 'kissing scene' the most. I just hope everyone thinks it looks believable."

— Actor Tom Selleck on his new film, In and Out, as quoted in Michigan's Between The Lines, September issue.

Identity has a
toll-free phone number!
Now folks outside of Anchorage
 can call us free of charge!
The number is:
1(888) 901-9876
Let us hear from you! Your calls are important!
Identity can help!
Past Out

Who Was Sappho?

The very term “lesbian” refers to the most famous resident of the Greek Isle of Lesbos. Sappho, who lived in the seventh century before the common era, was a celebrated poet whose sexuality has been the source of controversy for more than two millennia.

It is difficult to speak with much historical certainty about events and personalities that took place more than 2500 years ago, especially when written sources are scarce. In the case of Sappho, less than 10 percent of her poetry has survived, and much of what we have is fragmentary. Nonetheless, Sappho’s literary reputation has garnered much attention, and some biographical details are fairly clear.

Sappho was born to an aristocratic family in the town of Eressos on the southwest coast of Lesbos. Her mother was a Lesbian, her father was a Lesbian — and she had three Lesbian brothers as well. She may have been in charge of a girls’ school, and she wrote nine books of lyric poetry. Her poetic genius was such that a few centuries after her death, Plato wrote, “Some say the Muses are nine, but how carelessly! Look at the tenth, Sappho from Lesbos.”

Most of the surviving poetic fragments from Sappho’s repertoire have come from Greek and Roman authors who quote her — from a few words to several lines — in their own works. In addition, some fragments of papyrus and a shard of pottery with lines from her poetry have been found in Egypt. Because her surviving works are so fragmentary — and because sung Greek poetry doesn’t translate easily into written English — it is difficult to convey the power Sappho’s corpus had over the ancients. Nonetheless, her works continue to fascinate modern readers, especially those interested in her expressions of affection for other women.

The closest we have to a surviving complete Sapphic poem is her “Hymn to Aphrodite,” in which she celebrates her affectionate relationship with the Goddess of Love. In the song, Aphrodite asks Sappho which woman is currently causing her heartache, and reassures the poet that “if she won’t love you, she soon will.”

In another song, Sappho expresses her jealousy for a man who is able to talk calmly with a beautiful woman. In contrast, for Sappho,

“the instant I look upon you,
I cannot anymore speak one word,
But in silence my tongue is broken,
a fine fire at once runs under my skin,
with my eyes I see not one thing,
my ears buzz,
Cold sweat covers me,
trembling seizes my whole body,
I am more moist than grass;
I seem to be little short of dying...”

Although the lesbian desire in the above fragment is unmistakable, many interpreters have argued that the poem actually signifies Sappho’s celebration of one of her students’ heterosexual engagements.

The heterosexualization of Sappho has often had comic or ironic results. In his Lesbian Love: Old and New, published in the United States in 1966, Walter Braun argued, “In fact Sappho was a heterosexual, who in her attitude towards girls under her care can be compared with the attitude Socrates took to the boys he had to educate.” Well, sort of.

Many writers have pointed to ancient sources that claim Sappho had a husband named Kerkylas from the island of Andros. But the Greek word kerkos (tail) is common slang for penis, and andros means male. Claiming that a prominent woman-loving woman had a husband named, essentially, “Dick from Manville” is at best dubious evidence of her heterosexuality.

While many scholars have tried to interpret away Sappho’s erotic attraction for women, others have tried to destroy her work altogether. One reason so few of her poems have survived is that much of her work was burned by Christian zealots in late antiquity.

Despite such persecution, Sappho’s work and reputation have had a major influence on modern lesbian identity. Obviously the terms “Sapphic” and “lesbian” owe their origin to the Greek poet, but her influence is far greater. Many 20th century lesbian poets, such as Amy Lowell and May Sarton, refer directly to Sappho in their work. A seminal text in the lesbian-feminist movement of the early 1970s was entitled Sappho was a Right-On Woman. And for the last 25 years, a British organization named Sappho has organized social, political, and literary activities for lesbians.

“I don’t think there’s any question — when the [Hawaii Supreme Court] decision [on gay marriage] comes down — what it will be. Everybody knows there’s really nothing to decide because the state abysmally failed to meet its burden.”

— Dan Foley, the attorney who argued in favor of the Hawaii gay marriage case, to syndicated columnist Deb Price.
Imperial Court of All Alaska

The People’s Court of Horns and Thorns

Dear loyal subjects of the gay, lesbian, transgender, and bisexual community and all of our friends:

It is a pleasure to write you this month. Rosie has been away for two weeks and I sit here alone in the palace with more silence than I am accustomed. Rosie sends her love to you all from Australia. She regrets that she had to leave you all for so long but she had to visit the Queen Mum who is getting up in years (you do the math).

Over the past month, I have seen many of you and am touched by the number of people who have offered their help this year. It is a sign of a great year to come. Early this month Rosie and I attended the last official outing of the Mt. McKinley Non-ascent Club. It was held at the Triangle ranch and hosted by the DeLoach family. We were treated as would any Emperor and Empress (or maybe just the queens that we are), complete with our own Imperial Barge escorted by the McKinley Regatta. What fun! Thanks to you all!

This past weekend I had the pleasure of attending this year’s Pride Conference. My heartfelt congratulations to all who worked to make the Conference a success! It was an honor to meet and talk to both a gay hero and gay heroine in one day. Leslea’s presentation was particularly fun. Indeed the event as a whole was both informative and FUN. A special thanks to Empress XVIII Cherresse for the history lesson. Again, to the Pride Committee, thanks. Pride indeed!

For the next month, Rosie and I will be gearing up for Investitures on November first. The event will be held at the Wave at 7:00. Doors will open at 6:00. Do be on time! From October 24-26, Rosie and I will be representing Alaska at Portland’s coronation. Anyone who is interested in attending, contact Rosie or myself for more details at 563-2110 or mikey@alaska.net.

Which leads me to my last point. We promised you a web page and we have it. You can find it at Q NET AK. Go to http://www.mosquitonet.com/¬qnetak and look for the link. There are also many great links to gay organizations all over Alaska. Do keep in mind that these are “works in progress.” Special thanks to Webmaster Terry for his volunteer work keeping all of this going and to our Court’s own anonymous Webmaster (it’s an Imperial Secret) for all of his volunteer work.

I look forward to working with and seeing you all soon for the betterment of our community and for lot’s of fun! Feel free to contact us with your ideas, comments, suggestions, etc.

Yours in service and friendship,
The Denali Sterling Silver Ram
Emperor XXV of All Alaska Mikey LaChoy

“Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint.” — Mark Twain

CLASSIFIED ADS

ROOMMATE WANTED
Available on November 1, 2 BR duplex in East Anchorage. Cathedral ceiling in living room, FP, W/D, DW, pets on approval. $800/month, includes utilities. $500 deposit. 338-6655.

SEEKING PROF M/F ROOMMATE
To share elegant new secluded home currently being built (est. completion date end of Nov.) in Stuckagain Hts. (off E. Tudor Rd. through Far North Bicentennial Park), with 2 others & 1 spoiled dog. Home is over 3,700 sf, 4 lg. bdrms, 4 ba, 4 gar, 3 FP, outdoor spa, w/ fabulous views of city skyline & mtns. Priv full Ba of bdrm. Easily accessible, front wheel or 4X4 recommended. No smokers, dopers, or evangelicans plz. $500+ own phone. 338-8885.

Have you tried
Chiropractic

for:
- Headache
- Neck pain
- Shoulder pain
- Low back pain
- Leg pain
- Stress

Relief without drugs or surgery is possible!

Dr. Allison Hill
Dr. Hill has 15 years of experience. She is a graduate of the Texas Chiropractic College, and has done post-graduate work in neurology and low back disorders.

272-1272
Dr. Hill also utilizes Non-Force Techniques

The Hill Clinic
A Chiropractic Office
203 West 15th Ave., Suite 104 (corner of 15th & C)
Judge Upholds Gay-Benefits Law

by Terry Wilson, Tribune Staff Writer

Some overzealous letter writers, who tried to convince a judge that the City of Chicago erred in offering insurance benefits to gay employees, were advised that the hell they warned the judge of had space for them too.

With benches in his courtroom filled with on-lookers and five lawyers representing three parties seated before him, Cook County Judge Thomas Durkin announced his ruling that allowed the controversial Chicago ordinance to stand.

Then he addressed the dozen or so unnamed letter writers. “I’ve received a good deal of fan mail on this case,” Durkin said. “Since it came from professed Christians I would describe the mail I received as most un-Christian. I have been described as being on a slippery slope to perdition for doing what I believe to be my job. I am quite certain that if they are right, and I am condemned to hell, I will meet a goodly amount of them there because their attitude certainly shows a lack of a basic element — personal charity toward others,” he said.

Lawyers in the courtroom quickly denied knowing anything about the letter-writing campaign. Patricia Logue, an attorney with the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, which is representing two city employees who have applied for the benefits, said people increasingly have been turning to judicial intimidation if they do not like the way a case is going.

Durkin ruled that the city has a right to grant whatever health benefits it chooses to its 41,000 employees — that the decision is one that it made legally. Durkin also indicated that any court challenge likely would not result in victory.

Chicago’s domestic partnership ordinance was passed by the City Council on March 19 after several heated debate-filled hearings. It took effect May 16, and the lawsuit challenging it was filed then. At least 13 city employees have been granted benefits for their partners, a spokeswoman for the city said. Fifty more have requested informational packets, including the requirements and the application, she said.

Chicago Tribune, September 17, 1997.

Ford Exec Featured in Fortune

The September 8 issue of Fortune magazine featured “My Life As a Gay Executive,” a powerful personal reflection by openly gay former Ford Chief Financial Officer Allan Gilmour. In the introduction, Fortune writes, “Gays and lesbians who aspire to top corporate jobs find they must leave their sexual orientation at home because disclosure could injure their careers... How Gilmour’s [closed] homosexuality affected his success at Ford can only be guessed at, “noting he was passed over for CEO twice even though he was the candidate of both outgoing CEOs. Gilmour describes his own slow discovery of his sexual orientation, and explains that he understands why corporations avoid openly gay hires from high-profile jobs: “Companies don’t want executive personality being discussed; they want the products to be discussed.” As he began to attend more gay events, he “was concerned about general chitchat or rumors. Being gay complicated my life,” he says.

“What worried me most about coming out was the effect on Ford,” he admits. “I was afraid of being a diversion away from the business of Ford. I’d be a lightning rod. I was also afraid in a personal sense that I would be marginalized.” He also noted that “some companies who want to be leaders in eliminating homophobia and in providing fully equal treatment for gays and lesbians. The last acceptable prejudice is one too many. Yes, companies are in business to succeed and prosper, but discrimination and intolerance are never good business.”

In the traditionally conservative world of blue-chip companies and financial media, Fortune’s inclusion of a lengthy and candid discussion by Gilmour serves to open doors and minds in corporate America.

Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation promotes fair, accurate and inclusive representation in the media as a means of challenging homophobia and all forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation or identity.
Survey Shows Most Americans Support Gay Teachers

The Rockport Company, a subsidiary of the Reebok shoe empire, has unveiled the results of its “Rockport Comfort Barometer,” a national survey that examines American’s comfort level on topical issues, including how they feel about gay educators.

One of the questions was, “How comfortable are you having your children taught by an openly gay teacher?” The collected information coincided with the release of — and substantially validated the premise of — Paramount Pictures’ new comedy In & Out, in which Kevin Kline stars as a small-town teacher who is outed by a former student.

According to the survey, distributed in conjunction with the well-known Roper Starch polling organization, there is no consensus on how Americans feel about gays in the classroom. One thousand respondents were interviewed by telephone, and were found to be almost equally split in their comfort level in having their child taught by an openly gay teacher, with 44% comfortable with the concept and 47% uncomfortable.

One of the more striking demographic divides is gender. Interestingly, 38% of the men were comfortable as opposed to 53% who were uncomfortable, and 51% of women were comfortable while 42% were uncomfortable. Although men are more comfortable with most of the other issues presented, the gay issue is the only area where women are more comfortable. The gender result alone suggests very high homophobic tendencies in men.

Another major source of difference is the geographic region in which people live. In the Northeast, 55% of the people were comfortable; in the Midwest, 42% were comfortable; in the South, 36% were comfortable; and in the West, 52% were comfortable having their children taught by an openly gay teacher. Probably the nation’s lowest per capita gay and lesbian populations are in the Midwest and South.


"[I]t just seemed to be right for Lawrence — he had that type of spirit. My brother-in-law is gay, and I had been talking to him about having Lawrence come out, and he felt that it was really appropriate. I know [my brother-in-law’s] story very well, and fortunately, our family has been extremely accepting. His mother cried for one night, and then said: ‘Well, that’s it. Instead of looking for nice girls for you, I’ll look for nice boys.’” — Lynn Johnston, who draws the comic strip For Better Or Worse, to North Carolina’s The Front Page, August 29 issue.

HELP US TO HELP YOU

There are many ways in which our readers may assist in the publication of NorthView. It may be that you have a few hours of time to donate in some manner, or you may have skills which you could apply on a volunteer basis. If there are no extra hours in your schedule and you have no skills which could be applied, why not consider sponsoring the mailing of one issue of NorthView.

Each month it costs approximately $100 to mail this publication to our members. Our primary sources of revenue are membership fees and advertising income. As postal rates have escalated over the years, so have our mailing expenses. We’re using the lowest rate structure available to non-profit organizations, but the costs continue to increase. If you have the ability to donate the cost of mailing a complete issue of NorthView, we would like to speak with you about it. Or, if this is more than your checking account permits, why not contact one or more friends to see if a sharing of the expense can be worked out. You’ll find we are more than willing to work with you in whatever configuration is best.

In return, we would encourage you to allow us to publicly acknowledge your donation by displaying the following statement at the bottom of the front cover (not the bulk mail page which is visible to the entire world): “Mailing of this issue of NorthView was generously donated by ..............” If you prefer to remain anonymous, we understand and would simply insert “an anonymous donor” in the space.

If this is something you (or someone you know) are interested in doing, please contact Ruth at 563-1324, Tom at 333-7504 or Shirley at 338-3708.
White House Announces Appointment

HRC applauds Clinton’s continuing efforts

WASHINGTON — The Human Rights Campaign welcomed the appointment of longtime lesbian and gay rights advocate Virginia M. Apuzzo as an assistant to the president, making her the highest-ranking openly gay official ever to serve in the federal government.

“We applaud this appointment as yet another step in President Clinton’s promise to make his administration look like America,” said Elizabeth Birch, HRC’s executive director, “and we look forward to more appointments and nominations of openly gay people in Clinton’s second term.”

Apuzzo of Kingston, NY, was named assistant to the president for management and administration at the White House. In this position, she will direct all the management and administration functions of the White House complex and have oversight responsibilities for all agencies of the executive office of the president. These include the White House intern program, the photography office, the telephone service and the travel office.

The Human Rights Campaign has been working closely with the White House to screen and recommend qualified openly gay candidates to a variety of posts in Clinton’s second term.

Since 1996, Apuzzo has been associate deputy secretary of labor at the U.S. Department of Labor. Before joining the administration, she was president of the New York State Civil Service Commission and commissioner of the New York State Department of Civil Service, positions for which she was nominated by the governor and confirmed by the state Senate.

From 1985 to 1991, Apuzzo served as deputy executive director of the New York State Consumer Protection Board. For part of that time, from 1986 to 1989, she served concurrently as the governor’s liaison to the gay and lesbian community. Earlier in her career, Apuzzo was executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that lesbian and gay Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.

Supreme Court Rejects Gays-in-Military Appeal

WASHINGTON (Reuter) — The Supreme Court rejected a legal challenge to President Clinton’s “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy that allows gays to be discharged from the military. The action marked the third time in the past year the high court has refused to get involved in the legal battles over the policy, which took effect after Congress adopted a law in 1993 relaxing the military’s 50-year ban on gays.

Under the compromise reached between Congress and the Clinton administration, the military cannot question members or recruits about their sexual orientation, but overt homosexual acts or statements can lead to discharge. The law allowed for openly gay members to remain in the military only if they show they have not engaged in, have not attempted to engage in, do not intend to engage in and do not “have a propensity” to engage in homosexual acts.

The case involved Richard Richenberg, who joined the Air Force in 1985. He became a highly decorated officer, rising to the rank of captain and flying a number of combat missions during the Gulf War. Richenberg told his commanding officer in 1993 that he was gay. At a later hearing, he testified that he had not engaged in any “prohibited conduct” in the past and would not do so in the future, but admitted he was attracted to men.

The Air Force recommended that he be discharged. A federal judge in Nebraska and then a U.S. Court of Appeals upheld the decision, rejecting Richenberg’s arguments that the policy violated his Constitutional rights. In his Supreme Court appeal, Richenberg said the policy constituted an impermissibly broad, content-based restriction on speech in violation of the First Amendment. “Government sanctioned bigotry and prejudice in the military should be unconstitutional,” he said.

Copyright 1997 Reuters Limited.

If you are planning to mail an insert with the NorthView, you MUST notify Shirley Randal at 338-3708 by the 5th of the month. Otherwise, including your insert with the current issue CANNOT be guaranteed.

Sweeping Lady
A Residential and Commercial Cleaning Service
Janet H. Elliott, Owner
Phone/Fax (907) 276-7608
e-mail sweepkdy@sinbad.net
P.O. Box 91046 Anchorage, AK 99509
The Hartford Drops Insurance Rates for Gay Couples

HARTFORD, CT — September 26 — PRNewswire — According to The Hartford, one in eight households deserves a break on their auto insurance.

"Married couples generally are responsible drivers, allowing them to enjoy lower premiums," says Bruce Hale, director of diversity marketing for The Hartford. "We now believe domestic partners, as well as widows, widowers or divorcees raising children fall into this category as well. We've named this category 'diverse households' and we're dropping their auto insurance rates accordingly — in some cases by more than 25 percent. We believe it is our responsibility to match rates more accurately to loss exposures."

Unmarried partners have never been offered the low rates that married people enjoyed. But, like married couples, these diverse households usually have an emotional and financial commitment to dependents and loved ones. As a result, they typically demonstrate responsible driving behavior.

Subject to state availability and normal underwriting guidelines, any diverse household is eligible. The Hartford definition of a diverse household includes — a same-sex or opposite-sex "domestic partnership," which is a co-resident, committed relationship of mutual caring between two people who are jointly responsible for their living expenses and who expect their partnership to be long-term.

The program lowers pricing for diverse households by charging a lower rating factor in its class plan or by expanding eligibility for a multi-car discount or both, as would be done for married couples and currently is available in 35 states, through independent agents representing The Hartford.

The Hartford is one of the nation's oldest and largest international insurance and financial services operations. It is a leading provider of commercial property and casualty insurance, automobile and homeowners coverages, and a variety of life insurance, annuities, employee benefits, and asset management plans. The Hartford's Internet address is <http://www.thehartford.com>.

"I don't feel one way or the other about it [the coming out of Anne Heche, Ellen DeGeneres' lover]. She was the best person for the part [as my romantic interest in our upcoming movie]. She's still the best person for the part. I'm really looking forward to working with her. She's a very talented actress. I have no problem with her."

— Harrison Ford to Oprah July 15.

Alaskan Urban

Located in downtown Anchorage, Alaskan Urban Coffee and Art offers the finest in coffee drinks, sandwiches, soups, and fresh baked goods.

In addition to the good food, Alaska Urban Coffee and Art offers good taste for your visual sense as well by carrying some of Anchorage's finest artists.

This week's featured Artist:
Noel C. Bell "A Rose by Any Other Name..."

Alaskan Urban invites you to the Opening show of Noel's work September 19, 1997 from 6 p.m. To 9 p.m. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the AWAIC Shelter.

272-9518

600 Barrow Street, Anchorage, AK 99501 [ON THE CORNER OF 6TH AVE & BARROW]

Open 7 am - 6 pm Mon thru Fri
Bishops to Parents: Love Your Gay Children

by David Briggs, AP Religion Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. Catholic bishops are advising parents of gay children to put love and support for their sons and daughters before church doctrine that condemns homosexual activity. In a groundbreaking pastoral letter, the bishops say homosexual orientation is not freely chosen and parents must not reject their gay children in a society full of rejection and discrimination.

“All in all, it is essential to recall one basic truth. God loves every person as a unique individual. Sexual identity helps to define the unique person we are,” the bishops say. “God does not love someone any less simply because he or she is homosexual.” The document, titled “Always Our Children,” was approved by the Administrative Board of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops early in September.

In the last two decades, with almost every other church struggling over gay ordination or efforts to ease condematory church doctrine, the Roman Catholic Church has stood firm, teaching that homosexuality is morally wrong. In two high profile cases in the 1980s, the Vatican disciplined Seattle Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen for allowing a group of gay Catholics to meet at St. James Cathedral and revoked Charles Curran’s license to teach moral theology at Catholic University in Washington DC. Curran had said homosexual acts are sometimes morally acceptable.

But the mounting turmoil and pain felt by Catholics torn between church teaching and love for their gay children prompted several bishops to request guidance from the bishops’ Committee on Marriage and Family. The committee began studying the conflict in 1992.

The culmination of their work five years later comes as gay teens remain at special risk of suicide and running away from home. In their letter, the bishops describe parents who suffer guilt, shame and loneliness because their children are gay and report that “a shocking number” of homosexual youth are rejected by their families and end up on the streets. The parental rejection, along with the other pressures faced by young gays and lesbians, place them at greater risk of drug abuse and suicide, the bishops said.

Why the form of a pastoral letter from the church’s spiritual leaders?

“Primarily to get them to accept the fact that their son or daughter is gay or lesbian, and that their child was not damned forever,” Bishop Joseph Imesch of Joliet, Ill., chairman of the Committee on Pastoral Practices, said in an interview.

The Vatican, in the new Catholic Catechism and in the pronouncements of Pope John Paul II, has staunchly held that sex is morally acceptable only within the bounds of heterosexual marriage. And the U.S. bishops’ letter in no way abandons Catholic doctrine. It states clearly that genital sexual activity between same-sex partners is immoral and that the letter is not to be understood “as an endorsement of what some would call a ‘homosexual lifestyle.’” It draws a distinction, however, between homosexual orientation and sexual activity.

In the letter, the bishops urge parents to encourage their children to lead a chaste life and, at times, to challenge aspects of their children’s lives they find objectionable. But the bishops also tell parents that church rules should not be enforced at the expense of their child.

“First, don’t break off contact; don’t reject your child,” the bishops say. Instead, they say, create an atmosphere in which a child would be willing to discuss his or her sexual orientation. “This child, who has always been God’s gift to you, may now be the cause of another gift: your family becoming more honest, respectful and supportive,” the bishops said.

Among their recommendations, the bishops urge parents to “do everything possible to continue demonstrating love for your child.” That includes remaining open to the possibility that even after counseling, a child may still be “struggling to ... accept a basic homosexual orientation.”

The document also encourages priests to welcome homosexuals into parishes, to help establish or promote support groups for parents of gay children and to let people know from the pulpit and elsewhere that they are willing to talk about homosexual issues.

When they lead chaste lives, homosexuals should be given leadership opportunities in the church, the bishops said. “Generally, homosexual orientation is experienced as a given, not as something freely chosen,” the bishops said. “By itself, therefore, a homosexual orientation cannot be considered sinful, for morality presumes the freedom to choose.”

“The basic hope here,” said Bishop Thomas O’Brien of Phoenix, chairman of the Committee on Marriage and Family Life, “is that parents will accept their children, regardless of their sexual orientation.” Mary Ellen Lopata, co-founder of the Catholic Gay and Lesbian Ministry in the Diocese of Rochester, NY., said many parents struggle with the conflict between loving their child and their understanding that church teaching condemns that child.

“For them to hear the bishops say to love your child first is very important and can go a long way to help them resolve those conflicts and begin some healing,” she said.

imesch, head of the Pastoral Practices committee, said the church is nowhere near even discussing whether it could ever consider homosexual acts morally acceptable. In the meantime, however, gay men and lesbians “still need to be accepted as people,” he said. “The judgment part is left to the Lord.”

Associated Press, September 30, 1997

Women and men...men and women. It will never work.

— Erica Jong
Gay Catholics Respond to Bishops’ Pastoral Letter

WASHINGTON, DC, October 1, 1997 — “Dignity/USA welcomes the pastoral letter, ’Always Our Children: A Pastoral Message to the Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministries,’ issued by the board of the U.S. Catholic Bishops Conference. This pastoral letter is a positive step and we commend the bishops for their improved sensitivity to the issues which confront parents and their lesbian and gay children, but all is not perfect,” says Dignity/USA Executive Director, Charles Cox.

While this pastoral letter has been in development for five years, and does not break any new ground theologically, it does demonstrate greater pastoral sensitivity. Robert Mialovich, President of Dignity/USA said “The document points out the real dangers that confront gay and lesbian youth. It also offers some very practical advice to both parents and pastors. Our hope is that all bishops, pastors and parents will take it to heart and that we will see improved ministry to our community. Since its founding in 1969, Dignity/USA has been working for improved pastoral attention to the real lives of gay men and women. The bishops’ letter recognizes some of these needs and our task will be to hold them to their words.”

Mialovich went on to say, “Though the letter is very pastoral, we continue to be disturbed by the bishops’ continued distinction between homosexual orientation and homosexuality activity. This is a distinction that makes little sense to us and will be a stumbling block in the way of any effective pastoral program seeking to encompass the letter’s recommendations. Further, the letter still leaves parents without guidance on how to respond positively to their children’s same-sex relationships.” Charles Cox also went on to say, “The most serious fault we find with the letter is the incomplete explanation and view it provides regarding chastity. Dignity believes that expressions of love, including sexual intimacy between two individuals of the same sex, can be morally acceptable.”

Cox also said, “Today, however, Dignity/USA is pleased with the tone and content of ‘Always Our Children’. Our hope is that this letter is only the beginning of a more open and fruitful dialogue between gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders, persons and the Catholic Church. Dignity looks forward to meeting the ‘outstretched hand’ of invitation offered by the bishops.”

The bishops’ letter is especially timely in light of Dignity/USA’s sponsorship of Lesbian and Gay History Month throughout October. Dignity/USA is the nation’s largest organization of Catholic lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgenders and individuals and their families and friends.

For further information please contact: Charles Cox at 202/861.0017 or 703/379.5630 or Robert Mialovich at 703/979.3693.

Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation promotes fair, accurate and inclusive representation in the media as a means of challenging homophobia and all forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation or identity.

GLAAD Press Release

World Watches Gay Couple Mourn at Diana Memorial

Thanks in large part to live feeds from British networks Sky News and ITN, the American media coverage of the Princess Diana funeral and memorial services featured two gay men comforting one another. According to viewer reports to GLAAD, coverage by at least E! Entertainment Network, MSNBC, NBC, CBS and ABC included a montage of mourners in London that had two men hugging and weeping, and one of the men gave the other a comforting kiss on the forehead. In addition, the September 15 issue of Newsweek features an image by the Associated Press of two men holding one another in mourning.

Considering that over 33 million Americans (86 percent of the audience share) watched the funeral and surrounding coverage on television, this casual inclusion of gay people showed how we are, indeed, everywhere and a part of the mosaic of society.

MURPHY’S MANOR by Kurt Erichsen

The Directory

**Advertising...**

This directory is our “yellow pages” and reference guide. It’s free! The designations of (L)esbian, (G)ay and (A)lly indicate the business or service ownership. All people are welcome to call for further info. NOTE: in some instances you might encounter employees who are unaware of this Directory and its significance. Don't be offended: enlighten. All listings are in Anchorage unless indicated. Contact: 258-4777

**Advertising:**
- (L) KT Creative, Katie, 278-9174

**AIDS:**
- (A) Alaskan AIDS Assistance Assoc., 263-2050 (see 4A's page)
- (A) Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center (free HIV testing), Stephanie, 257-4637
- (A) Interior AIDS Association (Fairbanks) 452-4222
- (A) Pierce County AIDS Foundation (WA), 206-383-2565
- (A) Shanti of Juneau, 907-463-5665, 1-800-478-AIDS (2437)
- (A) S.T.O.P. AIDS Project, Koola, 278-5019

**Apparel & Clothing:**
- (A) The Look, Kari, 278-5665

**Architectural Design:**
- (G/A) Lipson/Brown Design, 274-0913

**Automotive Repairs & Fuel:**
- (A) Courtney's, Linny, 562-1227 (see ad)

**Bakery & Catering:**
- (G) Alaska Best Catering, Maurice, 338-1080, 337-1969
- (G) Illusions, Brian, 277-9191
- (G) Silver Spoon Cleaning & Catering, Brent, 258-0828

**Bed & Breakfasts, Accommodations:**
- (G) Alta's (Fairbanks), Pete, 907-389-2582 (see ad)
- (G) Arctic Trader, Doug, 277-3862
- (G) Aurora Winds, James Bill, 346-2533
- (L) Cheney Lake B&B, Mary Janeta, 337-4391
- (G) Crabtree Guest House (Fairbanks), Phil/Bobby, 907-451-6501
- (G) Fairbanks Hotel, (Fairbanks) Doris Lundin, 888-329-4685
- (G) Gallery Bed & Breakfast (Anchorage) Leslie Evans 274-2567
- (A) Island Watch, Eileen (Home), 907-235-2265 (see ad)
- (L) Northern Comfort, Reeda, 276-2106
- (L) Regina's, 276-8754
- (L) Rose-Beth's B&B, (Anchorage) Rose Beth, 337-6779
- (G/A) Sauer Lodging (Seward), Gordon, 907-224-8946.
- (L) Wandering Women (Juneau) Carol/Sudie 907-588-2410.

**Books:**
- (A) Alaskan, Gene, 561-1340 (see ad)
- (A) Cyrano's Books & Cafe, Sandy/Jerry, 274-2599
- (A) Into The Woods Bookshop (Fairbanks), Connie, 907-479-7701

**Churches:**
- see Spiritual

**Computer Services:**
- Consultants, Graphic Design, & Desktop Publishing:
  - (G) Ability Design Associates, Doran, 562-9575
  - (A) Alaskan Support Consortium, Walter Ersken, 522-4275
  - (L) Angie, 337-0253
  - (L) Binky's Den, 205 4th Ave., Seward, Sue or Terri, 224-PAWS
  - (L) Catworks, Catherine, 563-5492
  - (L) CDA Services, Waltraud, 276-6826
  - (G) Ekstine RAM, Robert Iris, 522-4275
  - (G) Greg Parsons, 344-9269
  - (G) gra/fit/Lucian, 561-5856
  - (L) Helleck & Assoc, Terry, 276-3869
  - (G) Mad Dog Graphx, Michael Ardaiz, 276-7279
  - (G) Mark, 274-9472
  - (G) PC Possibilities, 248-6277
  - (G) ServCom Alaska, Mark Mathis, 274-9472
  - (L) TechLink, LeMarge, 276-8662.

**Supplies & Equipment:**
- (A) Frigid North, Tom, 561-4633 (see ad)

**...Health**

**Training:**
- (G) Seven Treasures Enterprises, Don, 562-9496
- (A) Find It! Business Services (Macintosh); Larry, 279-4862

**Education Services:**
- College and Boarding School Selection:
  - (A) Tom Croke, 277-7004
- Social Research Design, Student, Consultation, Evaluation:
  - (L) Susan E. Johnson, PhD, 272-4113
- Tutoring:
  - (A) James, Biology, 248-6412
- (L) Carolyn Lancaster, M.Ed., School Survival Skills, 274-5059
- (A) Kathleen L. McDonough, School Survival Skills, 274-5059

**Entertainment:**
- (G) Art Services North, Daryl, 561-2115
- (G) Capri Cinema, 561-0064 (see ad)
- (G) Mascorrela Music, Diane, 277-9751
- (A) Syzygy/Music Magic, Linda, 274-2599

**Bars & Restaurants:**
- (G) Illusions, Brian, 277-9191
- (L/G) O'Brady's, 344-8033, 338-1080, 563-1080
- (G/L) Palace Saloon (Fairbanks), Alaskan, Sat Only
- (G/L) The Raven, 276-9672
- (L/G) The Wave, 274-0690 or 561-WAVE (see ad)

**Coffee Houses:**
- (G) Hollywood Canteen, Rand, 562-0737
- (A) Quiver Bean Coffee Co., Scott & Becky, call or fax 278-BEAN

**Disk Jockeys:**
- (A) Lake Webb, 373-2689 (hm), 279-3300 (wk)

**Drag Shows:**
- (G/L) The Wave, Vicki, 274-0690 or 561-WAVE (see ad.)

**Theatre:**
- (G) Breaker Productions, Linda 277-5630
- (A) Out North Theatre, Gene/Jay, 279-8099

**Financial, Insurance, Investments:**
- (L) Chris, 561-8040/338-3962 (see ad)
- (G) Jon Howe, Bank of America, 276-3335
- (A) Catherine Smith, C.P.A., 562-2438

**Income Tax Preparation:**
- (A) Lynn Thomas, 263-0720 (see City Mortgage ad)

**Independent Marketeer:**
- (A) Mark, 279-5264

**Insurance:**
- (L) Chris, 561-8040/338-3962 (see ad)

**Mortgage Brokers:**
- (A) Lynn Thomas, 263-0720 (see City Mortgage ad)

**Retirement Plans:**
- (A) Lynn Thomas, 263-0720 (see City Mortgage ad)

**Florists/Greenhouses/Nurseries:**
- (G) Every Bloomin’ Thing, Jerry, Malcom, 274-3158
- (A) Mile 6.2 Greenhouse, Dale, 694-3978
- (A) Tryck Nursery, Doug, 345-2507 (see ad)

**Furniture/Furnishings/Gifts:**
- (A) Design Craft, David, 279-0638 (see ad)

**Hair Styling:**
- (G) Gabriel, 272-9045
- (A) 36th Avenue Hair Design, Ladjha, 561-8967

**Health:**
- (A) Alpine Indoor Air Purification Systems, Marjory, (907) 746-6381
- (L) Health Advocacy/Medical/Legal Research, Linda, 337-0253
- (A) Home Health Care, 261-3173
- (A) Natures Own Way, Roberto/Debby, 561-0181

**Alternative Medicine/Health:**
- (A) Hope, 561-2300
- (A) Gatekey, Ketki/Jaimini, 561-7327
- (L) Movement Options, Shari, 274-FLEX (3539)
Directory

Health...

(A) Rainbow Counseling, Maureen, 277-0582
(A) Thee Cutting Edge (Seward, AK), Connie, 907-224-8996
(A) The Ole Herb Shoppe, Constance, 522-4372

Body Work:
(L) Beth (MT), Debbie (CMT), 566-0842
(G) Don, 338-8826
(L) Leslie, 278-3346
(A) Marion, 562-0012
(L) Vicki, 277-5222

Counseling:
(A) Anchorage Center for Families, 276-4994 (handles all kinds of family issues.)
(A) Barton Sloan, LCSW, 563-5765
(A) Connie, 562-1826
(G) F. Ken Freedman, 566-1708 (see ad)
(A) Jann, 248-9408
(A) Marion, 562-0012
(A) Psychological Services Center, 786-1795
(A) S.T.A.R. (Standing Together Against Rape), 276-7279
(L) Tess, Alternative Counseling, 562-6281
(A) Tom Gormley, ANP, 565-4014

Electrolysis:
(G/L) Gentle Touch Electrolysis Clinic, Bronwyn, 258-6608

Dental Care:
(A) Ward Hubert, DDS, 248-0022

Health, Naturopathic:
(A) Hope, 561-2330

Obstetrics & Gynecology:
(A) Jane, 563-5151

Reiki/Counseling:
(A) Joyce, CMT, 562-1916
(A) Karen Lasota, 566-6056
(L) Spiral Services, Barbara, 274-4089

Helpline:
(G/L) Anchorage, Identity Helpline, 258-4777 (see ads)
(G/L) Fairbanks Lesbian/Gay Line, 907-458-8288
(G/L) Open Door Youthline, 456-GLBY
(G/L) Gay & Lesbian National Hotline, 1-888-843-4564
(G/L) Juneau, SEAGLA, 586-GAYS

Home Maintenance & Repair:
(Carpet & Linoleum Installation:
(A) Big Bob’s, Mark, 561-2121
(A) Don, 349-1065

Floor & Tile:
(A) Quality Floors, Bob & Ruth, 248-3900

Electrical:
(G) The Electric Doctor, Bob, 561-2225

House Cleaning:
(L) Connie’s House Cleaning Service, Connie, 276-3147
(A) Green Valley Cleaning, Tara, 345-4657
(G) Silver Spoon Cleaning, Brent, 258-0828

Odd Jobs:
(L) Deb, 275-3018
(A) Service with a Smile, Liz, 274-5290

Painting:
(L) L & L Painting, Lisa, 277-7549

Kites, Games, Banners, Puzzles:
(A) Northwind Kites, Pat, 279-4386

Legal:
(L) Mendel & Associates, Allison, 279-5001 (see ad)
(L) Rhodes, Phyllis; Mediator, 346-2217
(A) Short, Sylvia, 562-4992 (see ad)

Media:
(L) NLGJA (National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association), Kim, Alaska coordinator and board member, 277-2704

...Real Estate

Music/Instruments:
(A) Oldtime Music Company, Marge, 561-6862 (see ad)

Native Arts/Culture:
(A) Moon Dancer Arts, Rosemary (Wasilla), 373-5353

Newsletters/Newspapers:
(A) Alaska Women Speak, Mary Lee, 696-0924
(A) Anchorage Press, Nick, 561-7737 (see ad)
(L) Klondyke Kontakt (Alaska Women’s Cultural Center), 277-9763

(G/LA) NorthView (Identity), 258-4777
(G/L) Perspective (SEAGLA in Juneau), 586-4297

Pet Care & Veterinarian:
(A) Alaska Pet Palace, Sharon, 276-0068
(A) Doggie Hut, Arlid, 279-5861
(A) Dr. Ginny, 345-1515
(L) Dr. Vicki, 345-1515
(A) Dr. Jean Battig (Fairbanks) 452-6055

Photography:
(G) Photos by Frank, Frank, 337-3399 (see ad)

Political:
(A) Alaskans Concerned About Latin America (ACALA), Ruth, 333-1190
(A) Anchorage Women’s Political Caucus, contact Janet Mitson, 688-0116

(G/L) Equal, Inc., 274-9226
(G/L) Log Cabin Republicans, (503) 642-7292

Printing, Electronic Graphics:
(A) Alaska Micro Associates, Rebecca, 337-0460
(A) SOS Printing, Val, 562-1678
(A) TimeFrame, 562-3822 (see ad)

Support Groups:
(G) Ability Design Associates, Doran, 562-9575
(G) I.M.R.U.2 (Youth Group), 566-4679
(A) PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Anchorage), Sylvia 562-4992, Fred 562-7161 (see ad)
(A) PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Fairbanks), Mary Jo, 907-459-8985
(A) PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Juneau), 907-463-4203

AA:
(G) Gay, Joyous and Free, see Calendar
(G) Midnight Sons, see Calendar

Deaf Support:
(A) Interpreter Referral Line, 277-3323 voice, 277-0735 TTY
(A) Deaf Rehabilitation Serv., 277-3456 voice, 258-2232 TTY

Recreation:
(L) Alaska Women of the Wilderness, Rachel, 688-2226
(L) Equinox Wilderness Expeditions, Karen, voice mail: 274-9087
(A) Flies by Ilene (Eagle River), 907-694-6964
(A) Knik Glacier Tours; Palmer, Alaska; Tom Faussett, 745-1577 (see ad)
(L) McKinley Air Service, Lee Ann & Keli, 800-564-1765
(L) Puffin Family Charters, Leslie, 278-3346 (see ad)
(G) Roy’s Bikes, Roy, 333-8221
(A) Stan Stevens Cruises, P. O. Box 1297, Valdez, AK 99686. (907) 835-4731, (800)-992-1297.
(G) Triangle Tours, Greg, 786-3707, 800-779-3701 (see ad)
(A) Wild Iris Fishing and Sightseeing Charters (Valdez) Barb, 907-389-2725

Real Estate:
(G) Apollo Real Estate, Bob, 561-0661 (see ad)
(A) Bela Bodnar, RE/MAX, 244-4415 (see ad)
(L) Bronwyn Real Estate, 907-277-4744
(L) Century 21 (Missouri), Lucille, 417-745-6798(w); 417-993-4302(h)
(A) Coldwell Banker, Elaine, 562-2378
Directory

Real Estate...

(L) Dynamic Properties, Jill, 261-7663
(A) Rona Mason, Realtor, 242-8877 (cell) or 279-8877. (see ad)
(L) Waltraud Barron, 278-1981 (see ad)

Research:
(L) Cracium & Associates, 279-3982

Social/Educational:
(G) Anchorage Garden Buddies, 272-5608
(G) Imperial Court of All Alaska, Bob, 275-0046
(GL) Southeast Alaska Gay & Lesbian Alliance (SEAGLA),
(Juneau) 907-586-4297

Spiritual:
(A) Anchorage Church of Religious Science, Center for Positive
Living, Rev. Nancee Sweeney, 258-0010
(A) Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Art, 248-3737
(see ad)
(A) Church of the Covenant (Matanuska Valley), Pastor Howard
Bess, 746-1089
(A) Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 2311 Pembroke, Anchorage,
welcomes all regardless of orientation. 333-5253
(A) Lamb of God Metropolitan Community Church, 258-5266
(A) St. James the Fisherman Episcopal Church (Kodiak), Fr.
Paul, 486-9276
(A) Unity Church of Anchorage, 346-2824

Student Organizations:
(G/L) Alaskan Gay and Lesbian Association (AGLA, Fairbanks)
Pete, 907-479-7348 (see Club Notes)
(GL) The Family (formerly Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Association), UAA, (see Club Notes)

Tattoos:
(A) Bitchin’ Tats, Kathy, 561-3653

Travel:
(G) Apollo Travel Agency, Bob, 561-0661 (see ad)
(G) World Express Travel, Greg, 786-3701

Writing & Editing Assistance:
(L) Kathy, 278-2840

Club Notes

AA
Gay Joyous & Free, see on-going calendar.
Midnight Sons, see on-going calendar.

Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association (4AS) Anchorage
offers HIV testing Wednesday afternoons (2:00-4:00pm) at
their offices, 1057 W. Fireweed Ln, Ste. 102. Friday at noon
is a luncheon for People With HIV and AIDS. We are always
looking for groups willing to donate and provide these
meals. If you are interested in helping with the luncheons,
volunteering with the 4As, or need information, please call
the 4As at 263-2050.

Alaska Gay and Lesbian Association of Fairbanks (AGLA)
a UAF Student Organization, has regular meetings open to
gays, lesbians and allies, 1st and 3rd Friday. For further
information about meeting time and place, contact Matthew
at 907-474-6666, ext. 3535.

Anchorage Garden Buddies (AGB)
a social group for gay men looking for an alternative to the
"bar scene." For next meeting time and place or to get on
the mailing list, call 272-5608

Anchorage Women's Political Caucus
for lesbians and non-lesbians, meets 7:00pm at the First
United Methodist Church (Anchorage) on the first
Wednesday of each month.

Bruin Brotherhood of Alaska (Levi/Leather/Bear)
1441 E. 12th, #2, 99501 Contact Dan at 258-2629 or
276-6947. Meets the third Saturday at 7 pm.

Community Connection Line
Voice mail for women's events that missed the calendar(s).
Call 566-FEMM.

EQUAL, Inc. Anchorage
EQUAL provides education and information about political
issues to our community. EQUAL is not a political action
committee and does not endorse candidates. For more
information, call 274-9226.

EQUAL, Inc. Fairbanks
purpose is to keep the community informed about political
and legal events which have an effect on the lesbian/gay
community, to educate about community issues, to organize let-
ter writing campaigns and other forms of political action,
and to promote equal rights for all Alaskan citizens, regard-
less of actual or perceived sexual orientation. For more in-
formation about EQUAL, contact Laura Burleson at 907-
479-7348 or e-mail FSLEB@aurora.alaska.edu

Fairbanks Gay Youth Group
Leave message on voice mail for info: 457-3524.

Fairbanks Radio Station
KSUA 91.5 "Homophonic Radio", 7-9 p.m. Wednesdays

Family—Anchorage
meets every Saturday from 6:00-7:00pm in the Arts Build-
ing, Room 121 on the UAA campus. Social group after
7:00pm (bowling, dinner, etc.). High school people, bi-
sexual men & women, transvestites and transsexuals most
welcome! Call Harry O'Brien at 786-7644.

Feminist Sing-a-Long (women only), Anchorage
third Saturday of every month, 1741 Westview Circle; call
Carol and Fran at 333-0871. Non-singers are more than wel-
come. 6:30pm potluck, 7:30pm singing (from the KK—
Thanks!)

Gay Bar, Anchorage
free legal question and answer sessions on issues of interest
to lesbians and gays. Second Monday of every month, noon
at 845 'R' St. 279-5001.

*For an extra $50.00, I can give you ladies the bed with the mirrored ceiling.*
Club Notes...continued

**Gay/Lesbian Book Club**

at Barnes and Noble on third Wednesday, 7-9 pm. Kim Meck, Community Relations Coordinator for B&N Hosts this discussion group.

**GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network)**
a national organization which has a local chapter in Anchorage. Meets the first Sunday each month, 1pm at AUUF. Membership is confidential. We welcome educators and non-educator allies who are interested in the problems of GLBT youth in our public schools. For more information call Fred, 562-7161.

**Identity, Inc. Anchorage**

founded to improve self and community awareness, understanding, and acceptance of the expression of individual sexual identities, in order to promote positive attitudes and healthful ways of living for all people within the State of Alaska. Identity builds bridges between different segments of the gay/lesbian and non-gay/non-lesbian communities. Potluck Social is held on the 4th Friday of each month at the Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 3201 Turnagain Street. Doors open at 6:30pm; dinner at 7:00pm; program at 7:30pm. See the Calendar for program title.

**Imperial Court of All Alaska (ICOAA), Anchorage**

is a social and support group that contributes to our community by being active in many causes: we plan and present wonderful events to raise money to supplement organizations for them to carry out their important goals. See Calendar for this months planned activities, or contact Emprise Saloon Elia at 275-0046. Write P.O. Box 104023, Anchorage 99510-4023.

**IMRU**

Anchorage gay youth group meets Wednesdays 5:30-7:30 p.m. at 4As, 1057 West Fireweed Lane, Suite 102. 566-IMRU

**Interior AIDS Association (IAA) Fairbanks**

offers medical and dental program assistance, “buddies” (volunteers who help HIV & People Living With AIDS), meal delivery, food supplement program, a lending library, and counseling support. If you’re interested in volunteering or need assistance, please call the IAA in Fairbanks at 452-4222.

**Lamb of God Metropolitan Community Church (MCC)**

Anchorage holds Sunday services at 7pm, and Wednesday at 7:00pm at 4th and Barrow. 258-5266 Church is open Monday through Thursday 10:30am-4:00pm.

**Last Frontier Men’s Club, Anchorage**
a members-only club for the Leather/Bear communities of Alaska. Meetings 3rd Thursday of each month. 6:00pm at the Raven; campouts & weekend trips, too. Write T.L.F.M.C., P.O. Box 202054, Anchorage, AK 99520-2054.

**Mt. McKinley (non-ascent) Club, Anchorage**
is a social group open to anyone gay, lesbian, or ally. Look for upcoming events in the Calendar, or call Eric at 277-3236.

**Northern Exposure Bowling League, Anchorage**
each Sunday afternoon at 4:00pm, Park Lanes. 561-8744 (Bob).

**OPAL**
a lesbian social organization with an open membership. OPAL holds monthly potlucks with different themes on the 3rd Sunday of each month. Please call Roby at 522-3953 for more information.

Over 50’s Club

a lesbian book and support group. Meets second and fourth Mondays, 7-9 pm. Videos and books will be a part of this positive energy discussion group. For location, call Rose Beth (337-6779) or Lorraine (276-3337).

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG) of Fairbanks meets the 3rd Sunday of every month from 4:00pm to 5:30pm at Into the Woods Bookstore & Coffeehouse, 3500 College Road, Fairbanks, Call 45F-PFLAG for more information.

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG) of Juneau meets the 1st Saturday of every month at 10:30am at Mendenhall Mall Library. Phone 907-463-4203.

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG) of Southcentral Alaska holds meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of every month. For information call Sylvia at 562-4992 or Fred at 562-7161.

**Queer Round Table (QRT)**

Call to list your club’s events and hear about other club events. Barb (H) 274-4984 or (W) 564-5818.

**Radical Arts for Women (RAW)**

Voice mail 566-3783 info and message.

**Shanti of Juneau**

offers support services to persons with HIV/AIDS and their loved ones, as well as offering comprehensive AIDS prevention and educational information. Offices: 222 Seward, Suite 200; mail: P.O. Box 22655, Juneau, AK 99802-2655. 907-463-5665, 1-800-478-AIDS (2437).

**SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous) Anchorage**

12-step meeting; Tues., Thurs., Sat. Check ongoing calendar for times and locations. 566-1133

**Southeast Alaska Gay & Lesbian Alliance (SEAGLA)**
a non-profit volunteer organization that provides a support network for lesbian and gay people in Southeast Alaska. Publishes monthly newsletter Perspective. P.O. Box 21542, Juneau, AK 99802-1452. Phone 586-GAYS

Support Group, Soldotna
group for people with HIV or AIDS or families or friends. Call Jan at 907-262-2589.

**UFMCC’s Perry Receives Invitation to White House Conference on Hate Crimes**

LOS ANGELES — The Rev. Troy D. Perry, founder of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, the world’s largest gay and lesbian spirituality organization, has received an invitation to participate in the White House Conference on Hate Crimes on November 10, 1997. The conference will explore both federal options for addressing hate crimes as well as community-based remedies.

Perry will represent the more than 42,000 members of UFMCC congregations at the White House Conference. “I intend to use my voice to call for enactment of broad protections for our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered citizens,” said Perry.

In a letter to the President, Perry noted that, “UFMCC members and congregations have suffered a two-fold victimization by hate crimes — crimes against our worship facilities because of our faith and crimes against our predominantly gay and lesbian members because of their sexual orientation.

UFMCC Press Release
Cyberlust

Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association (AAAs): <http://www.alaskaindus.org/>
AGLA: AK Gay & Lesbian Assoc. <smph@aurora.alaska.edu>
Binkley, Andy: <abinley@mosquitonet.com/>
Burleson, Laura: Gay Rights activist, Chair of Equal of Fairbanks: <telb@aurora.alaska.edu>
Capri Cinema, Rand Thornley: <gebh91a@prodigy.com>
Carlisle, Karen: Writer, feminist, teacher, activist: <rnke@getonthe.net>
Carter, Dan: Gay activist, Dandelio, Equal: <alaskadan@pol.vn.com>
Cheney B&B: <Cheneyb@alaska.net>
Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere (COLAGE): <http://www.colage.com/>
Childs, Lucian: Graphic artist <lucian@alaskacom.com> <http://www.alaskacom.com/gfx/>
Crabtree, Phil, B&B, Fairbanks, <crabtreehome@geocities.com>, <http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/4169>
Cracium, Jean: market research, Pride Conference: <jcracium@cracium.alaska.net>
Fairbanks Gay & Lesbian Community page: website <http://www.mosquitonet.com/~qnetak> e-mail <qnetak@mosquitonet.com>
Fauth, Terry: <kaebar@mosquitonet.com>
Freedman, F. Kenneth: Gay/Lesbian activist, <fkcn@servcom.com>
Gay & Lesbian National Hotline: <http://www.glnh.org/>
GLAAD: Gays and the media <http://www.glaad.org>
Haase, Michael: <michael@servcom.com>
Hillman, Fred: <fhillman@alaska.net>
Hillman, Bronwyn: <bronwyn@alaska.net>
IAA - Interior AIDS Assoc. Fairbanks <iaa@polarnet.com> website: <http://www2.polarnet.com/~iaa>
Identity: <http://www.ptralaska.net/~seagla/identity.htm>
Imperial Court of All Alaska (ICOA): see link at <http://www.mosquitonet.com/~qnetak>
Into The Woods Bookshop: Connie, Fairbanks, AK e-mail <woods@polarnet.com> website <http://www2.polarnet.com/~woods>
Kohout, Jen: <jenkout@pol.vn.com>
Last Frontier Men's Club; see club listing <FMC@Micronet.net>
Naff, Don: <donnaff@alaska.net>
Olson, Chris: <CMOFrida@alocom.com>
Out North: <outnorth@artwire.org>
PFLAG: Fbsx. website <http://www.mosquitonet.com/~pflag> e-mail <pflag@mosquitonet.com>
Pinney, Pete: UAF instructor and owner of Alaska's B & B; <php@aurora.alaska.edu>
Rachael, Tom: <TomAndAl@alaska.net>
SEAGLA: <http://ptralaska.net/~seagla>
Severson, Kim: Entertainment editor Anchorage Daily News, board of Nat'l Lesb & Gay Journalists Assn: <kseverson@pop.adn.com>
Shanti of Juneau: <http://www.ptralaska.net/~shanti>
Soule, Barbara & Bonham, Candy: <solcandy@alaska.net>
Thornley, Rand: Capri Cinema: <filmgallery@com.com>
Triangle Tours, Lesbian/Gay travel <triangle@servcom.com>
Vann, Beth: <ircbel@bl.gov.ai>
Walton, Eric: Q*Klatch, Q*K Outdoors, PFLAG, EQUAL etc.: <fshell@aurora.alaska.edu>
Wave, The: Lesbian/Gay bar & cafe house: <wave@alaska.net>
Wochner, Rex: San Diego-based journalist, LesBiGay info (Internet): <rwochner@netcom.com>
Youth site: <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/B_Hartman3>

Calendar

October

Wednesday, 22:
A Identity board meeting, 7pm, Identity office (AUUF) visitors welcome.

Friday, 24:
A Identity Potluck, 6:30pm, AUUF: Gay Drama by Out North Theater.

Saturday, 25:
A Women's Coffeehouse, 8pm, Firehouse Cafe' (formerly The Java Joint.) Lisa Parker opening for Full Circle, and all- women's rock band. Suggested donation $5.

Sunday, 26:
A Helpline training, 5-7pm, AUUF, 337-2011 for info.

Friday, 31:
A Halloween Costume party at The Wave.
F Halloween party, call either the IAA at 452-2222 or AGLA at 455-7352.

November

Saturday, 1:
A Women's Two Step, 7:30- 11pm, Pioneer Schoolhouse. Donations cheerfully accepted.
J PFLAG, 10:30am-12:30pm, Mendenhall Library conference room.

Thursday, 6:
A Opening of My Left Breast, Out North Theater, 7pm.
A Opening of Crystal Laman photopainting show, Kaladi Brothers on Tudor.

Wednesday, 12:
F Farthest North G & L chorus, 6pm, Into The Woods Bookstore & Coffeehouse.
A PFLAG, 7-9pm, AUUF.

Sunday, 15:
F PFLAG, 4-5:30pm, Into The Woods Bookstore & Coffeehouse.

Friday, 28:
A Identity Potluck, 6:30pm, AUUF.
On-Going Calendar Items

SUNDAYS
A Metropolitan Community Church Services, 7pm, 4th and Barrow
A Gay, Joyous & Free, 7pm, AA Meeting, 1231 W. 27th Ave.
F PFLAG, third Sunday, 4-5:30pm, Into the Woods Bookstore.
F Homophobic Radio, KSUA 91.5
F Men's Volleyball, 2pm, Mary Siah Recreation Center.

MONDAYS
A Gay Bar, Anchorage, noon, Second Monday, 845 K St., 279-5001.
A Gay, Joyous & Free, 7pm, AA Meeting, 1231 W. 27th Ave.
A Over 50's. Lesbian book club 2nd and 4th from 7-9 pm (see club notes).

TUESDAYS
A Righteous Babes Radio Show, 7pm, KRUA-FM 88.1.
A SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous), 8pm, Church of Religious Science, 7th & A, 566-1133.

WEDNESDAYS
A Free HIV TEST at 4A's, 2pm - 4pm, 1057 W. Fireweed Ln, Ste. 102, Lori 263-2050.
A IMRU2 5:30-7:30 pm at 4A's 1057 W Fireweed #102, 566-4678 (566-IMRU).
J Social at Summit Lounge, after work.
J "Women's Prerogative," KTOO-FM, Wednesdays, 9pm-10pm.
A La Cage aux Wave (drag show), 10pm, The Wave, $3 cover.
A MCC, 4th and Barrow Street, Praise & Prayer at 7 pm.
A PFLAG, 2nd Wednesday, 7-9 pm, AUUF, 32nd and Turnagain St.

THURSDAYS
A SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous), 5:30pm, Unitarian Church, 566-1133.
A Friends and Family Support Group, 6:30pm, call 4As, 263-2050.
A Gay, Joyous & Free, 7pm, AA Meeting, 1231 W. 27th Ave.
A Country Dancing at the Wave, 8pm, taught by Patty, 561-9283.
F French Club, Russian Club, alternating weeks at Into the Woods Bookstore.
A Women's Forum, 2nd Thursday, 7pm, 338-9184.

FRIDAYS
A Lunch, 4A's, noon-1pm, 1057 W. Fireweed Ln, Ste. 102, Lori 263-2050. Everyone invited - HIV, volunteers and friends.
A Midnight Sun Gay AA Meeting, 7:30pm-9pm, 1231 W. 27th Ave.
A Identity Potluck fourth Friday at AUUF.

SATURDAYS
A SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous), 12 noon, Unitarian Church, 566-1133.
A The Family (UAA), 6pm (excluding school holidays). UAA Arts Bldg. Rm 121, Harry O'Brien at 786-7644.
A Women's Two Step, 1st Saturday, 7:30pm, Pioneer Schoolhouse.
J PFLAG First Saturday of each month, 10:30 to 12:30 in the Mendenhall Library conference room.

Legend
A Anchorage
F Fairbanks
J Juneau

She's in Love With a Guy; He's Gay.

Dear Genny X: I'm 46 years old. I'm married, but separated from my husband. I'm in love with a 43-year-old man. He's gay. We seem to have a real connection.

I don't know where this relationship is going. I'd like to get some kind of feeling about it. I really don't get a chance to talk to him very much because we work together and we're friends outside of work. But my hours and his hours often clash.

Signed, G.R. in Minneapolis

Hey G.R.: You're separated from your husband and you're in love with a gay colleague? Yipes. When you say "He's gay," do you mean that he's giddy and cheery or that he's a homosexual? If it's the latter, you must move on. Falling in love with gay men is stupid — they may adore your mind and heart, but they won't be able to really love your body.

It's understandable to fall in love with unavailable men because it's safe. But for your own sake, consider this man a dear friend and get some space from him until you have your feelings in perspective.

I would still have qualms because you say you work with this man. It may not be the most genteel maxim, but have you heard, "Don't dip your pen in the office inkwell?" Beware the office romance.

Get "some kind of feeling about it" if you ever figure out a slot of time to spend together, but don't act on your clarified feelings unless you're willing to give up your husband and possibly your job.

Gay Men and Alcohol

One Friday afternoon last summer I received a desperate phone call from a patient of mine who was on a week's vacation in The Pines. "I'm really terrified," he weepingly told me. "I've been partying since last night and realized I was in trouble when I came to this morning, could no longer pick up the vodka bottle because it was so greasy that it slipped out of my hand and broke. What's even worse, I'm alone, my butt is greased up, sore and there's no condom wrapper anywhere. I have no idea what happened or who it happened with. I only know that after last night I may very well not be HIV negative any longer. What should I do?"

The call was not a surprise since for several months he and I had been exploring his use of "recreational" drugs and alcohol. I had often told him that his descriptions made clear that the way he used and had come to rely on chemicals was causing problems. "I would suggest that you get on the train, come back into the city and go to the beginner's AA meeting. When you get there, walk up to whoever is running the meeting, tell him or her that this is your first meeting and could they get you an interm sponsor who will guide you through your entry into the program? Call me later and tomorrow so we can touch base." This was not some flaky individual. He was a very well educated and sophisticated computer professional. That phone call began his long hard journey to learn how live and enjoy himself free of chemicals. Unfortunately, this man's story is all too familiar, and similar to that of scores of other men who have consulted me for psychotherapy over the years. Most studies, including a highly regarded 1988 survey in San Francisco by Ron Stall and John Wiley have found that the frequency and variety of drugs used by gay men is greater than that of heterosexual men. But, gay men are not so different than the rest of society in using either alcohol or some other drug to help them have a good time and to get off steam. For many people recreational use does not pose a major difficulty. This article is intended to help you decide for yourself whether your use of drugs has caused you to lose part of your life.

HOW ARE DRUGS AFFECTING YOU?

When should you be concerned about your drug intake? The answer is - always. But at what point can you be considered chemically dependent? How can you determine whether you're denying that you have a drug problem? Most people are able to hang out, have fun, cruise, dance and go home with someone without having to be high. The next question to ask yourself is when was the last time you chose to do any of these things without being under the influence of alcohol or some other kind of drug? If you have difficulty remembering; the last time you did any of these activities drug free, then you most likely are abusing drugs to some extent. What about people who are never high during the work week and are only rarely adversely affected by the previous night or weekend? These may also be people who take a hit of something to go out dancing. Is there anything wrong with blowing off some steam and using drugs to help shut off the mind's computer? The answer is dependent upon whether there are any ill effects to you related to your use of alcohol or drugs. But, no one but you can honestly answer whether you have a problem with drugs. After all, people take drugs or drink because the effects usually feel good, and help dis inhibit people so they can do things they might be too uptight to do if they were sober. This can be good and bad. Please, think about your behaviors and be careful!

edited and reprinted from "Deciding When Drugs or Alcohol Become a Problem" by Michael Sherman, MSW May 4, 1997

Upcoming Events:
✓ AIDS 101 Training: Monday, Oct. 20 & Nov. 17, 5:30pm - 6:30pm @ 4 A's
✓ Free HIV Testing Wednesdays 2:00 - 4:00pm @ 4A's
✓ Every Thursday "HIV Support Group" 7pm - 8pm @ 4 A's
✓ Every Friday "Friday Lunch" for clients, friends and volunteers Noon @ 4 A's