

The Gazette

LEXINGTON GAY SERVICES ORGANIZATION, INC. AUGUST 1980

CONFERENCE ON GAY CONCERNS AND NEEDS HELD AT SHAKERTOWN

In an effort to forge a greater sense of community and to get persons who have been working on gay concerns or in activities of some interest to the gay community, a Lexington-area conference on the needs and concerns facing gay people in this area was held on Sunday, July 20, at Shakertown. Representatives and members of several groups as well as interested individuals were in attendance. A total of approximately thirty persons participated in the conference.

Representatives from Amber Moon and the Lexington Gay Services Organization explained their groups' functions with particular reference to their relationship with Lexington's gay community. Some persons also mentioned other groups in Lexington which offer some assistance or have some relevance to gay Lexingtonians. Such groups include Alternatives for Women and the Women's Action Alliance. A brief description of the above-mentioned groups is contained within this newsletter.

Of the thirty participants, approximately half were women and half men. This has particular relevance as one of the first topics taken up was the lack of cohesion and communication between the gay male and lesbian communities; the reluctance of some women to work with men who are not supportive of feminist concerns was discussed. Many of the women present felt that most men need to come to grips with the pervasive nature of sexism before meaningful and trusting working relationships can be forged. While such issues were broached and some discussion ensued, it was finally decided to

move on to other issues and to reapproach this particular concern at a later date.

A somewhat related issue and one of the main points of the conference is the notion of support groups for and among gay people. Everyone seemed in agreement that such groups are needed, both for providing friends and working toward some measure of gay presence in the community. In essence, it was decided that most gay people and groups have in common the need to have something in common--to develop the capacity to reach out and take some responsibility for one another. Lack of communication between groups which contain many gay members or relate in some fashion to gays is a barrier to establishing and maintaining such support; hopefully the Shakertown meeting made a start toward piercing that barrier.

A problem of particular concern to gay persons living in communities the size of Lexington is that of visibility. People, for a variety of personal and work-related reasons, often feel the need to maintain a certain degree of "closetedness". At the same time, more open gays often fail to understand or respect the reasons/motivations behind the actions of less open gays. In a town such as Lexington, there is the need for gay people to be more visible and hopefully accepted; at the same time the climate that creates this need also works against the willingness of individuals to withstand the problems/pressures often encountered if they are openly gay. Everyone saw the need to develop more

SHAKERTOWN continued...

tolerance in the community at large but few suggestions as to achieving such a change were put forward. One possibility would be the establishment of a gay community center. Persons could work--in varying degrees of visibility--in a center that would also help create a sense of permanance and, perhaps eventually, acceptance for gay people in Lexington. A committee was set up to explore the possibility for such a center and to work on the obstacles (mainly financial) facing such an effort.

One of the more specific ideas that came up at the conference was the notion of some sort of group made up of gay men and women interested in different recreational/social activities, such as sports. If people are interested in being involved in such a venture, they can send their name and number to GSO at P.O. Box 11471, Lexington 40511 and it will be forwarded to the people attempting to organize this group.

The Shakertown conference brought together many people concerned about the state of the gay community in Lexington and a number of ideas and issues were raised which merit further discussion and work. It is felt that another such meeting would be useful sometime in the future. When plans are more solidified, the Gayzette will carry a notice.

There were either representatives from or members of several groups in the Lexington area at the Shakertown meeting. While only the Lexington Gay Services Organization is an actual gay organization, there are other groups which, in the line of their work, offer some type of support to gay people or engage in activities of some in-

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terest to gays.

AMBER MOON PRODUCTIONS: a non-profit organization which brings women artists to Lexington who might not otherwise come; while the group is non-political and not specifically gay-oriented, many of the performers are supportive of the gay and feminist and other minority movements. Amber Moon has made it possible for people in Lexington to hear such performers as Holly Near, Sweet Honey in the Rock, and Hazel Dickens. During the coming year, there will be an attempt to bring women jazz artists to Lexington.

Amber Moon has established "Friends of Amber Moon" to provide more financial support for its productions. The rates are: \$5-low income; \$12-medium income; \$25-high income; any contribution, of course, is welcome.

ALTERNATIVES FOR WOMEN: an information and referral service which attempts to make women aware of alternatives to their present situation or to problems they may be experiencing; this organization is attempting to become more sensitive and responsive to lesbian concerns.

WOMENS ACTION ALLIANCE: has attempted to engage in action-oriented steps toward stopping violence against women. This group sponsored last fall's "Take Back the Night" march in Lexington.

If you are interested in working with any of these groups or in more information, either contact a member of that group or send your name and number to GSO at P.O. Box 11471, Lexington, 40511 and we'll put you in touch.

GAY BAR BUFFET

Mirror, mirror, in my eyes,
Tell me whom to idolize.
The tanned one there with the open
shirt,
or the one in the corner who refuses
to flirt?
How about the stud with the muscles
that gleam,
Fresh from the spa and an encounter
with steam?
There's a nice one there, all hairy
and lank;
I could cruise right on by and give
his 'kerchief a yank.
Here's a new face; if he'd just look
my way!
Don't stand there and stare, think of
something to say
That's clever or witty and will get a
reply
Before some other person gets the
nerve and walks by.
I'll take a dozen of those on the
dance floor, my dear;
Have them wrapped - but not tightly -
I'll be anxious I fear.
And where have you been all my life to
this point
While I've been wasting away in this
smoke-filled joint?
Say hello to your lover? You came
here to unwind?
Oh, I just saw a friend...I hope you
won't mind
If I run over to see him?! Nice meet-
ing you two,
What's with all these couples? What's
a single to do?
I'd ask you to dance, but you'll have
to dispose
Of that bottle of poppers you've got
shoved up your nose.
Yes, I know it adds rhythm, makes you
light on your feet,
But it gives me hot flashes, turns my
face to a beet.

My options are dwindling, the bar will
soon close.
I'll be stuck with myself, not the
first time, God knows.
Well, here goes my last shot, then
I'll call it a night.
He smiled! Could this be? Oh, my
God, it's a bite!
My apartment? Oh, not far. And I
drove; we're in luck.
Never die - that's my motto. Someone
always gives a fuck.

Joe Lincoln

The Gayzette has a need for feed-
back, readers and money (not neces-
sarily in that order); money and
feedback can be addressed to GSO at
Box 11471, Lexington 40511... as for
readers, if we obtain fifty more names
for our mailing list, we can apply for
reduced postage charges. Thus we could
broaden our readership and save money
at the same time. If you know of a
friend or someone who would appreciate
receiving The Gayzette, mention it to
them and get them to send us their
name and address. The paper is mailed
in a plain envelope with only the let-
ters "G.S.O." in the upper corner. If
at any time a person wants to stop re-
ceiving the newsletter, they just have
to drop us a note and their name will
be removed from our mailing list.

Also, this newsletter is intended
to be of and for the Lexington gay
community. Don't be shy--if you have
an opinion, want to review a book or
movie or feel you have anything to say,
send it to us. We could really use it.
And, don't worry, we send very polite
rejection notices.

RECORD REVIEW

Tom Wilson's Gay Name Game

Let's face it, if you wanted to buy gay-oriented songs sung by gay artists, your selection would be limited. But even if we had scores from which to select, Tom Wilson's Gay Name Game would still be one of the best. Most of the songs are characterized by a subdued camp humor ("Momma's Boy" and "The Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name") and treat topics ranging from threeways to lesbian seagulls. I have two personal favorites on the album. "Second Runner-Up" is about Anita Bryant. If you think she is a dead issue and nothing new can be said, you are wrong. The other is "Save Our Children/Recruiters' Fight Song", which counters the evangelists' pleas for protection of the children against US with a very special recruiting song--- "...cause ten percent is not enough." "1:00 A.M." is a bittersweet conversation that takes place in a gay bar, Tom speaking both roles. It would be pretty funny if it had not happened to us all at least once.

I cannot think of anything in the album that would be the least offensive to the most sensitive of us. I have played it for my parents and several straight friends, and it has gotten rave reviews. I suppose everyone reviewing a record, film or book feels obligated to find fault with at least one aspect of it, and I am no exception: it was not long enough. If you are interested in a copy of the album, I am told that Squecial Media has stocked it before; otherwise, direct your inquiries to Aboveground Records, Box 2191, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

Joe Lincoln

CALENDAR

- AUGUST 3: GSO rap group will meet at Shillito Park for a cookout and games; if you're interested, bring yourself, some equipment and a friend (latter two items optional); this will start at 5:30 p.m.
- AUGUST 4: Regular GSO monthly business meeting. 8:00 p.m. A NEW LOCATION: Southland Branch of Lexington Public Library. Nonmembers welcome.
- AUGUST 3: Spaghetti benefit dinner at Alfalfa for Amber Moon. 7:00 p.m.; \$5 donation and B.Y.O.B.
- AUGUST 13: GSO cookout and swim at Woodland Park; this starts at 6:00 p.m.
- SEPTEMBER 5,6,7: Garage sale to benefit Amber Moon at 1426 Elizabeth Street

GAY PARENTS

There will be an informal meeting of gay fathers and mothers on August 25 at 6:45 p.m. at 1207 Merman Drive. The purpose is to discuss common concerns, experiences and needs. Children are welcome. Lovers of gay parents who could come to help with the kids are also invited. You may have some mutual concerns to share with each other as well. If you have any questions, contact Carol at 272-9120 or Pam at 269-8702.

The Lexington Gay Services Organization has a continuing need for persons willing to participate in our speakers bureau as well as to operate our phone line. Training/guidance in each activity is provided and you would be helping a great deal if you can participate. Contact Doug at 255-8173 or Birch at 255-4993 or drop a note to GSO at P.O. Box 11471, Lexington 40511.