

GLSO NEWS APRIL 1996

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEXINGTON GAY AND LESBIAN SERVICES ORGANIZATION

FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

by J.T. Macfarlane

The Louisville Youth group describes itself is a "a confidential peer support-group for self-identified lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth, ages 14-21." I recently attended one of their Friday night meetings and I'm already looking forward to attending again. My motivation for attending is that I am currently working to form a similar group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and questioning youth ages 14-21 here in Central Kentucky.

The Kentucky Pride Initiative - Sexual Minority/Straight (PrISMS) Youth Alliance will hopefully fill the void which exists regarding services for central Kentucky's lesbigay youth.

My trip Louisville was as much an opportunity for observation as it was a chance to quench my curiosity regarding the closest non-collegiate lesbigay youth group. There were 3 facilitators and 28 youth (14 male and 14 female) in attendance, including myself and a friend who accompanied to me. The evening's topic was "Diversity," but because the scheduled speaker couldn't make it, improvisation set in.

The evening began with an introduction by everyone, including name and favorite car, after which I the group about PrISMS and where it will go from here. PrISMS is an alliance of supportive organizations, businesses, and individuals willing to provide their efforts both directly and indirectly to better meet the needs of central Kentucky's lesbigay youth. A focus group is scheduled for April 12 from which an advisory council will be formed. This council will then meet and

continued on page 2

THE CHURCH LADY

by Margaret Christopher Cartwright

There were 3 religious-right fundamentalists that had a fatal car crash. This landed the 3 at the gates of heaven. St. Peter was off that day so God asked them their screening questions before allowing them in. God asked each of them "What does Easter mean to you? The first fundamentalist responded, "Well, we dress-up in orange and black and go house to house for candy...." ZAP! God sent him to hell. The second one then gives it a try, "At our house, we decorate a tree and put presents under it and..." ZAP!! and to hell he goes. God then asks the third passenger in the ill-fated auto the same question. "Easter means that you died and were crucified on the cross. You were taken to a tomb where your body was was embalmed with oils and spices. A large stone was rolled in front of the tomb. On the third day, you arose, the large stone was moved away by an angel. You went out and saw your shadow and then went back in for six weeks!"

You see, the religious right is neither. They just can't quite get the story right. Our world wide congregation includes lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people. If you have left your traditional religious beliefs because of what the religious right has taught you, reconsider. We talk about and worship a loving and caring God that does not condemn us for acting naturally. God made us and loves us. We talk about what "Thou shalt not commit adultery" means to gay and lesbian people. We sing songs and celebrate our lives. We socialize, we support each other through sickness and health. We use inclusive language in our services. "We talk about things like that." Hope to see you Sunday morning at 11:30 am! ▼

GLSO Online:

Peter: pjtayl00@ukcc.uky.edu Elizabeth: bee@mis.net Tammy: sappho@mis.net

If you have a YELLOW mailing label It's time to RENEW.

FEWER, MORE VIOLENT GAY HATE CRIMES IN REPORTED IN '95

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs issued a report Tuesday that said there were 2,212 such hate crimes targeting lesbian, gay or transexual persons in 11 major cities in 1995, down 8% from 2,401 in 1994. Documented gay-related slayings fell to 25 from 29. Still, the crimes in general were more violent, with a 10% increase in assaults and rapes, according to the coalition, which also analyzed such crimes as arson, robbery, larceny and harassment.

The national peak in reported violence against gays and lesbians was in 1992, when homosexuality was an issue at the Republican National Convention, the issue of gays in the

continued on page 11

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GLSO News

Published Monthly by the Lexington Gay/Lesbian Services Organization P.O. Box 11471 Lexington, KY 40575

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Glso Annual Dues and Newsletter: \$15 Dues and Newsletter for Couples: \$20

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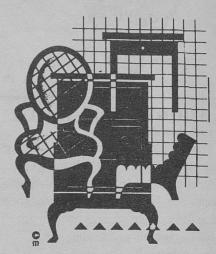
from the front page

conduct a discussion group at the upcoming UK-Lambda conference. Shortly thereafter, PrISMS will begin conducting meetings for area youth.

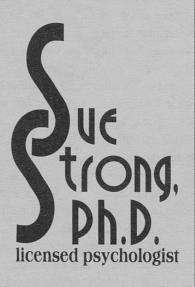
A discussion of the Louisville Youth Group's own beginnings ensued, afterward we moved on to an open discussion regarding diversity, both within the LYG and the community at-large. I would like to thank the LYG and all those who welcomed my questions and note-taking. Hopefully with LYG's help, PrISMS will not have to undergo the many initial problems which often sink an organization such as this.

Anyone interested in helping with KY PrISMS Youth Alliance or any young person interested in attending, PLEASE contact me at (606) 548-3206 or Mary at (606) 266-5904.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

THE WASSON AWARD

The Wasson Award, to be presented at the annual Volunteer Awards Banquet during Gay Pride Month, is the most prestigious award out Lesbigaytrans community can bestow on an individual. The Wasson Award is given to the volunteer who has made the most outstanding contributions to our community during the past year.

This wards is named for after the first recipient, Jeffery Wasson, who was responsible for having the sodomy laws overturned at the Kentucky Supreme Court. Other recipients have been Keith Elston and Linda West for her work with Fairness Alliance.

Organizations and or individuals are encouraged to submit nominees to: Wasson Award, GLSO, P.O. Box 11471. Lexington, KY 40575 by June 1st. ▼

GLSO BOARD ELECTIONS

The nominating committee of the GLSO Board is looking for individuals with some time and energy to commit to the lesbigay community. There will be five positions up for election in June and we will be mailing out ballots to all members as well as having them available at the Pride Picnic. Board members are expected to attend regular monthly meetings of the board and to serve on at least one committee during the year. Some of our committees are: Pride Month, Advertising, Social Events, Newsletter, and Excel. At this time we are particularly in need of an individual interested in becoming a Excel Phone Co. Representative and in a number of people to help organize social events. Although each of these committee has at least one GLSO Board members, other people in the community are always welcome to volunteer their time with us. If you think you might be interested, call Mary (266-5904),

rice

Michael(225-1828), or Terry(255-5469) ▼

KY PRISMS YOUTH ALLIANCE

The time has come for a lesbigay/straight youth support group in central Kentucky. PrISMS Youth Alliance (Pride initiative-Sexual Minority/Straight Youth Alliance) is in the developmental stages and is looking for help. A focus group will be meeting on April 2nd at the downtown Public Library on the 4th floor in meeting room B.

J.T. Macfarlane, who writes the Fountain of Youth column for the GLSO and volunteers with AVOL, has gathered together some material and initiated this brainstorming meeting. We will be talking about our goals, organizing concepts, and ways of reaching interested youth. We hope to form a core group of people and an advisory Board made up of community members representing a variety of organizations.

As the lesbigay pride movement has gained social and political strength over the last few decades, more lesbigay adults have found freedom and happiness in their lives than ever before. Adolescence, however, is still a time of isolation, harassment, fear, and self-hate for far too many of our youth. Fourty-five percent of gay males and twenty percent of lesbians report experiences of verbal or physical assault in high school. Lesbigay youth are two to three times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers. Many of us remember our high school years as our most difficult time.

And yet, as a whole, the adult lesbigay community has been reluctant to reach out to youth, often because we fear homophobic charges of recruitment. Throughout the country this trend is changing. There are now close to 250 youth groups, phone lines, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered-

specific support groups in the United States. In central Kentucky, there are none of these outside of college campuses. The time has come for us to act. Join us on April 2nd for discussion of KY. PrISMS Youth Alliance. ▼

ATTENTION LATENT JOCKS!

This is for you womyn that have always wanted to be a "jock" and play softball but were always afraid to try. Are you the cheerleader in the stands while your girlfriend is out on the field? Do you desire to get involved with softball but either have never played the game or you skills are so latent that you aren't sure what your abilities are?

Well here's your chance! "SOFTBALL CAMP." This is an organized effort to help you realize your potential. We will work on the basic skills and knowledge necessary to play softball. This will be done in a safe, supportive, nurturing environment with the emphasis on having fun?

The plan is to meet 4 times then evaluate where we want to go from there. We will meet on Sunday mornings starting April 14th. Practice time will run from 1_{-} to 2 hours. Spectators are NOT invited.

If interested please call us: Janette and Laura 276-2685. ▼

LEXINGTON MCC FREE SEMINAR

Lexington's MCC is again offering a free seminar to the community. It is a program that you would usually pay up to \$100.00. The program is called "Leading the Way" and is designed to help you better understand yourself and the people you work with and become a more effective leader. It is highly recommended to any one who is a leader in a lesbigay organization or who is in a leadership position a work. It will start on Wed. April 10th at 7:00p.m.. at MCC. Everyone is welcome ▼

Song flap cancels GOP GIG FOR GAYS

The Maricopa County Republican Party has handed a Phoenix gay men's chorale a hard-line edict: Don't ask, don't tell, and for Pete's sake, don't sing. The party canceled a Friday night appearance by the Grand Canyon Men's chorale at an awards dinner after party Chairwoman Bernice Roberts took offense at a phrase in a song the group planned to sing. The song "Diversity" includes the lyrics, "We're gay men, and we're here to sing for you."

"They were here to sing patriotic music," she said, adding that it would have been just as inappropriate for her to stand and sing, "I'm married and I have a husband, and I'm proud of it." ▼

STUDENTS REPORT SENATOR'S AIDS REMARK TO GAY RIGHTS GROUP

from The Detroit News

State Sen. Doug Carl doesn't deny saying that AIDS stands for "Anal Inserted Death Sentence." But he regrets that his words became public after two Sterling Heights teenagers reported them to a gay advocacy group in Detroit. "I have said that in the past, but it was in the context of talking about dangerous, sexual acts that are not natural for two men to engage in."

The teens interviewed the senator as part of a research paper on politics. He suggested the teens may have set him up, but they deny it. "Both of us just wanted to talk to the senator but with his gay-bashing and his comments about AIDS, I lost all respect for him," commented one of the students. "We were just asking questions to see what the senator's views were on issues that interested us

and our friends. We found out that he doesn't represent us very well."

The teens, who said they are not gay, contacted the gay-rights Triangle Foundation that they were told about by a friend. The foundation issued a news release detailing Carl's comments and blasting the senator as homophobic and insensitive. "They came to town with hating on their minds," said Carl, R-Sterling Heights. "It was a setup motivated by their desire to discredit me in the public square." \blacksquare

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A TIME

It's Fundamentally Christian to Reject Politics of Hate

By Jimmy Carter

(First ran in the Los Angeles Times, 2/23/96)

It is admirable for Americans to promote our personal beliefs through either religious or political processes. But when we attempt to use our government to force others to worship as we do or treat those who differ as secondary citizens, then we violate the basic tenets of a democracy.

As a conservative Baptist, I am deeply concerned about divisive arguments that have driven wedges between people. We Christians can buttress our arguments on almost any subject with Bible scriptures and then claim that our conclusions should be applied universally. These attitudes can lead to condemnation or even persecution of those who are different.

Beginning about 20 years ago, some Christian leaders concluded a union with the more conservative wing of the Republican Party But even if the political marriage of fundamentalist Christians had been with Democrats, this would have been a conflict with my own belief in separation of church and state.

Now leaders of the highly organized Christian right have successfully injected into America's political debate some divisive religious questions. The most vivid examples involve sexual preferences, which obviously have highly personal and emotional overtones. Tragically, these issues have moved to the forefront of the 1996 presidential election scene.

Since almost all Protestants now condone divorce as an acceptable way of life and rarely mention fornication or adultery, it is much easier and more convenient for heterosexual Christians to focus on Homosexuality, refusing to acknowledge that this is a sin never mentioned by Jesus. From the New Testament, it is clear that leaders of the early church treated homosexual acts the same as fornication, adultery and many transgressions. The apostle Paul makes it plain that homosexual tendencies, along

with many other temptations, should be resisted: "Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." (I Corinthians 6:9). Then he goes on to say that all these acts had been totally forgiven. "And such were some of you but you are washed, but your are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

The driving issues in the early Republican primary contests have been made a strange and disturbing shift from economic and budget items to divisive social issues, notably abortion and homosexuality. In the early caucus contests, pressures from the more extreme religious activists have pushed almost every candidate to demagoguery, emphasizing vicious attacks on gay men and women ostensibly based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. An even more disquieting claim is that AIDS is God's punishment on someone who has sinned and that the sufferers should be treated accordingly. Jesus had similar encounters with lepers, who were also looked upon as condemned by God and capable of contaminating their neighbors. Christ set an example for us by reaching out to them, loving and healing them.

Other Christians and the general public must not condone, even by silence, these obnoxious attitudes, increasingly promoted among a few demagogic religious and political leaders. In addition to the direct punishment of many American citizens, undisputed acceptance of a premise that originates within the religious community tends to authenticate it among those who have their own personal prejudices.

We must make it clear that a platform of "I hate gay men and women" is not a way to become president of the United States.

Jimmy Carter was president of the United States from 1977 to 1981. He can be reached by email at 76702.2062@compuserve.com. ▼



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April 1996

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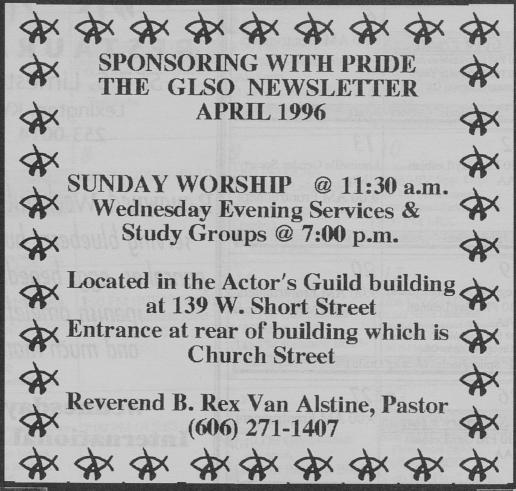
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LPGA PLAYER SAYS SHE'S A LESBIAN

NEW YORK (AP) — Golfer Muffin Spencer-Devlin reveals she is a lesbian in this week's issue of Sports Illustrated, becoming the first player in the 46-year history of the LPGA to publicly declare her homosexuality. "Coming out is like an incredibly huge weight being lifted from my shoulders," she said. "No more living in the shadows. No more lies." LPGA President Vicki Fergon, a 19-year tour veteran, responded, "I'm not saying every player will be thrilled about (this announcement), but we're a family and we respect each other."

Spencer-Devlin, 42, who has three wins in her 18 years on the tour, says she plans to "exchange vows" in May with musician-composer Lynda Roth. Homosexuality in women's golf became a prominent topic last year after CBS announcer Ben Wright was quoted as saying lesbians hurt the LPGA's image. \blacktriangledown

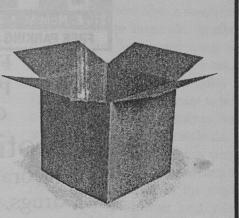
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- Elliott Stein, Village Voice

"The film gives new power to the words 'erotic' and 'sensual'."

David Overby, Toronto Informational Film Festival



COMING!

Next Calendar Ladies Treat! "French Twist"

from front page

military was being debated and gay-related initiatives were on the ballot in Colorado and Oregon. The coalition predicted that 1996 would be another high point due to the presidential campaign and because 18 state legislatures are debating same-sex marriages, which is firmly denounced by the Christian Coalition...

Unfortunately, the statistics may reflect the extent of anti-lesbigay violence inaccurately. Research shows that 70 percent of anti-gay offenses go unreported. Victims "essentially are 'outing' themselves" by making their sexual orientation public. ▼

OUT OF THE CLOSET AND INTO THE BIRDCAGE

By John Shelton

Heard a funny joke about Pat Buchanan the other day: His speeches are fiery, passionate, to the point, and even eloquent at times - but they were more effective in the original German. It is quite ironic that in this election year, when same-sex marriages and gay rights are major issues, and the radical right-wingers like Buchanan compete for the country's top positions (and I for one, wouldn't want him on top) the Americanized remake of Jean Poriet's classic gay-themed French farce La Cage Aux Folles is #1 at the box office.

LA CAGE became the highestgrossing foreign film ever released in the US. The remake, THE BIRDCAGE earned \$18.2 million in it's first week giving it the third highest March opening in movie history. On Broadway, the musical version of LA CAGE was the first gay-themed play to win a Tony Award. The success of the phenomenon that is LA CAGE raises an important question - does it reflect a nation that is more tolerant of gay lifestyles or a nation that is more tolerant of the negative reinforcement of gay stereotypes? Certainly the boorish rednecks who sat in the back row and booed at the end of the film support the latter theory. The moderates where this is question is concerned are represented by a couple. The male left the theater midway through, while the female stayed. majority of viewers laughing with, and cheering on the characters clearly reflect acceptance.

For the fans of the original film, watching BIRDCAGE is like seeing a favorite play with a different cast and setting, for it parallels the original almost scene for scene. For those unfamiliar with the story, LA CAGE is about a gay couple Armand and Albert who own a gay nightclub. Armand's son wants to marry the daughter of a prominent Republican Senator but must first get the parent's approval. Thus, he asks his father and Albert to hide their identity and lie about who they are - the typical set up of a farce. The

attempt at such a charade results in predictable yet hilarious complications. The biggest complication is Albert. Albert is the epitome of every gay stereotype imaginable. An effort to coach him into looking and acting more masculine proves to be an impossible task. In fact, Albert and Armand (a.k.a. Albin and Renaldo in the original): manage to be the most stereotypical gay couple in screen history, and yet at the same time, the most lovable.

Wisely, Robin Williams portrays Armand with less flamboyance and camp than Ugo Tognazzi displayed in the original. Nathan Lane on the other hand, relishes playing Albert, an uninhibited queen's dragqueen. What the current actors share with actors in the original is a screen chemistry based on the simple premise that Armand and Albert truly love each other. The actors easily convince us that these two have been together for 20+ years. Above all, THE BIRDCAGE is a love story and that is, perhaps unconsciously a large part of its appeal. The subtle way that Armand has of making up with Albert after a lover's spat is simply sweet, sincere and romantically. THE BIRDCAGE is a love story that is funny, entertaining and worth seeing - but it was better in the original French. \blacktriangledown



Laura E. Kaplan
Licensed Clinical Social Worker

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