

Grand River Rainbow Historical Project

*celebrating the lives and
times of rainbow folk in
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The Voice

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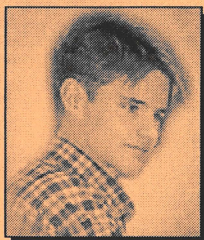
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Volume Three

October 2000

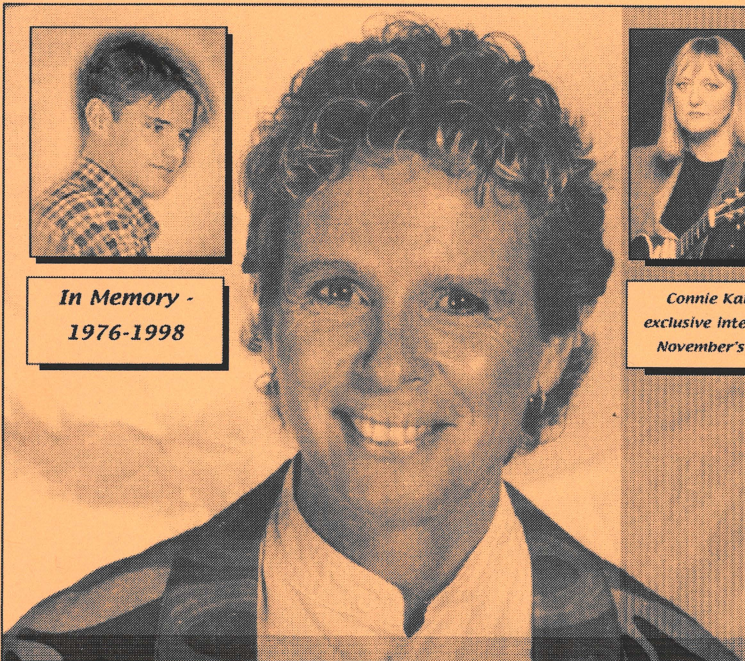
Issue One



*In Memory -
1976-1998*



*Connie Kaldor -
exclusive interview in
November's Voice.*



Heather Bishop: Part One of an Exclusive Interview Page 32



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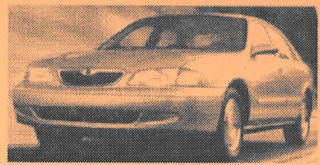


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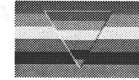
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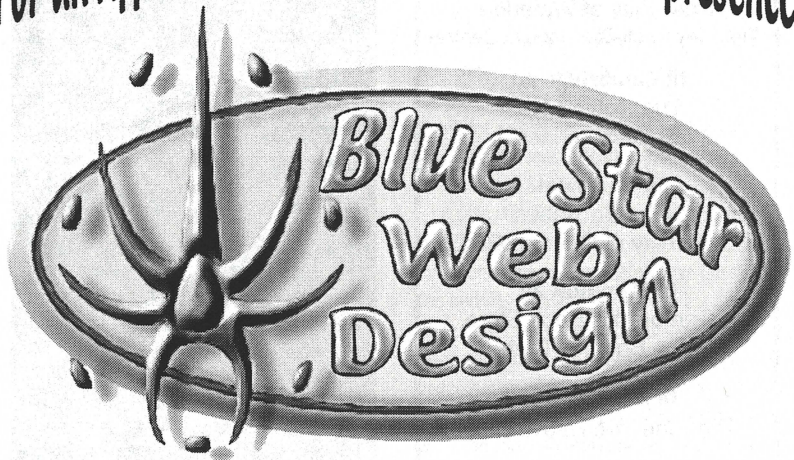
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Lesbian Visibility

By Ms. A.J. Mahari

Lesbians are finally gaining some much-needed visibility.

Lesbian culture, like so much in any culture, is still being defined by those whose lives it is compromised of. In the past lesbian culture had many of its roots in folk music and the feminist movement. For many, being lesbian had a similar and somewhat predicatable meaning. This is changing with this increase in visibility along with the ever changing perspective of the generations.

With the furthuring of lesbian culture and its ever-widening diversity many lesbians are left somewhat bewildered as to what their collective cultural-identity is. Lesbians are faced with many challenges in laying claim to what is rightfully theirs -- not the least of which is getting equal space and respect within the LGBT community.

Increased visibility often causes an increase in oppressive tactics from law enforcement.

Witness the recent headlines about the police raid of a bathhouse in Toronto during a lesbian event. (page 6).

Then there is the example of Anna, a lesbian who participated in the UK's version of "Big Brother" and came in second picking up overwhelming support from the public at large. (see page 37)

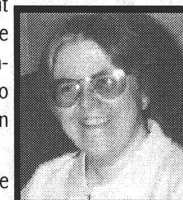
The internet has given us a vehicle through which we are witnessing an ever-increasing explosion of lesbian visibility, information, culture and community.

With all of this positive increased visibility lies still one very vexing aggravation that lesbians have long-faced -- the reality that many straight men just can't seem to accept that lesbians want and need their own space -- a space that has little or nothing to do with them (apart from friendships and family).

The result of this perceived affront to heterosexual manhood and sexuality repeatedly bears witness to these men exploiting and invading lesbian culture. They often don't take us seriously while they intrude by wanting to somehow share our lesbian love of women. A love they cannot possibly understand in their quest for sexual gratification. Lesbian love of women goes much deeper than mere sexual gratification. (See Shades of Grey page 15)

Lesbian visibility, like gay, bi or transgendered visibility is getting much more media attention. Sometimes it is not so positive but overall the benefits should outweigh the burdens.

Lesbian culture must be further defined. It must continue to be shared and enhanced in order that we may continue to esteem ourselves and to have a unique and special place within which we can truly feel at home, for the women that we are, just as we are. Increasing visibility is playing a very significant role in how we define ourselves.



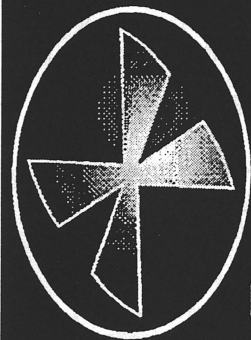
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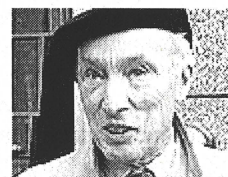
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Goodbye, Mr. Trudeau

By Trevor Fenton

The death of Pierre Trudeau, Thursday September 28, 2000, at the age of 80, should resonate with the queer community. Many of us, myself included, have lost a personal hero.



Whatever your overall thoughts and feelings about the man and his politics, I think we should recognise his contributions to the liberation of bisexuals, gays and lesbians (and, to be sure, all women).

He introduced reforms to homosexuality, divorce and abortion laws as Minister of Justice in 1967 - reforms that were considered to be radical at the time. Most important, however, was the work he did to give Canada the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, entrenched in the Constitution. Although there is no direct reference to sexual orientation in the Charter, the Supreme Court ruled a few years ago that discrimination against gays, lesbians and bisexuals is implicitly forbidden by section 15, the equality section. It is because of this ruling (M. vs. H., I think) that immigration, CPP, income tax and numerous other statutes have been updated to remove discrimination against same-sex domestic partnerships. I know, we still don't have same-sex marriages and the transgendered are still largely without protection. The fight isn't over yet, but we are starting to win some key battles.

Although he retired 16 years ago, the credit for recent legislative advances, at both the federal and provincial levels, often belongs to Mr. Trudeau. The present government may have passed the new laws, but let us not forget that it was Trudeau's Charter that forced the issue. The present federal government hid behind the Supreme Court ruling when challenged by their opponents, instead of simply telling them the

changes were the right thing to do. 16 years removed from office, and still he leads.

So, I salute Pierre Trudeau and I mourn his passing. Whatever his failures as Prime Minister (and they were many, don't misunderstand me), I think he deserves the profound respect of our community.

"Pierre Trudeau dreamed of a society that afforded all of its citizens an equal opportunity to succeed in life, whatever their backgrounds or beliefs, whether rich or poor,"

"He was a man like no other - a man of brilliance, action, grace, style, wit and playfulness. He was a man of extraordinary courage, a complex man whose love of Canada was pure and simple." Prime Minister Jean Chretien said in a statement.

"...for those of us who were there when Pierre Trudeau was prime minister it was the magic of the man that is etched and cherished in the mind's eye. We embraced his diamond-sharp intellect, his irreverence, and the style of his leadership and life.



"For the better he changed us as a nation."

"He seemed to come from out of nowhere in the 1960s, saying things like, 'The state has no business in the nation's bedrooms.' He borrowed the phrase from a Globe and Mail editorial in December 1967 when he was Minister of Justice explaining legislation he had introduced in the House of Commons that would reform divorce laws and liberalize laws on abortion and homosexuality.

Source: www.cbc.ca

Another celebrity lesbian couple is calling it quits.



Rocker Melissa Etheridge and her girlfriend, director Julie Cypher, announced Tuesday they were ending their relationship after 12 years. The couple has two small children together.

"With the utmost of love and respect for one another, we have decided to separate," the couple announced in a statement released by Etheridge's label, Island Records.

"As committed parents, our top priority continues to be what is in the best interest of our children. Though elements of our lives will change, our family will always remain intact."

Etheridge and Cypher were one of Hollywood's most famous lesbian couples, after Ellen DeGeneres and Ann Heche, who announced their breakup last month.

Toronto Police Raid Women's Bath House

Toronto's lesbians were looking forward to their one big "women's night" of the year at a bathhouse, having snapped up all the advance tickets in just ten minutes and turning out more than three hundred strong on September 14 - 15 -- but five male police officers were unwelcome guests as they wandered through Club Toronto for more than an hour before taking the names of about ten women and leaving without making any arrests. Police insist it was a routine inspection triggered by organizers' special event liquor license. However the women called it harassment, and the police visit angered the lesbian and gay community at a time when it's trying with some trepidation to develop a working relationship with the department under new Chief Julian Fantino. In fact a community meeting had already been scheduled for September 17 to discuss a police liaison committee. The Club Toronto police action is under review.

The usually all-male Club Toronto, a licensed bathhouse, is in

the ward of gay City Councilmember Kyle Rae, who was quick to tell the *Globe & Mail*, "This is an outrage. An outrage to a community that has established itself as equal but different. The police have not been into a bathhouse investigating a complaint in almost twenty years. I'm shaking, I'm so angry." He later told the *Star* that some police officers had actually called him later in the day to find out what had happened at the bathhouse. Rae, who had opposed Fantino's selection, complained, "The police at headquarters had no idea what those goons at 52 Division undercover are doing. I think there are a bunch of renegades working out of 52 Division undercover. It's a morality squad. That is how the unit is operating."

Chief Fantino told reporters, "My understanding is that they were there to basically do what we do day in and day out all the time -- that is monitor and investigate issues pertaining to issuing of liquor licenses. It's a routine occurrence."

Man opens fire in gay bar, kills 1

ROANOKE, Va. (AP) -- A man who said he wanted to shoot gay people opened fire in a gay bar, killing one person and wounding six others, police said.

The suspect walked into the Back Street Cafe in Roanoke, Va. late Friday night, (Sept 23/00) ordered a beer and after a few minutes, pulled a handgun from his coat and fired repeatedly, said Roanoke police spokeswoman Shelly Alley.

Seven of the 25 people in the bar were hit. Danny Lee Overstreet, 43, was killed.

Ronald Edward Gay, 53, was charged with murder, and police are investigating the shooting as a hate crime. (Source: The Associated Press)

Court upholds Surrey School Board's same-sex book ban

SURREY, B.C. - A Court of Appeal in British Columbia ruled yesterday that the Surrey School Board does have the right to pull three controversial books from its classrooms. The books in question are: *Asha's Mums*, *Belinda's Bouquet* and *One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dads, Blue Dads*.

Lawyers for the school board argued that it's inappropriate for children aged five or six to be taught about same-sex families. Opponents

of the ban had argued that excluding the books could lead to discrimination against children of same-sex couples.

The court said it's acceptable but not "recommended" for the books to be in the school library. However, this doesn't stop teachers from taking the books out of the library and reading them in class.

THE ARTS REPORT - CBC Radio

Great publication. It's great to read so much interesting stuff and also to know where I should spend my gay dollars.

-- Trevor B, Hamilton

I like *The Voice*. I like what you do. I have been wondering why there isn't more information and stuff for bisexuals. I hope that you will consider including more things of interest to us.

-- Marilyn C, Waterloo

Why do you have to have so much that is about mental health issues from therapists or spiritual stuff? I guess there's a lot of baggage in GLBT communities but really. What about some more entertainment type news or articles?

--J. B., Cambridge

Will you ever address some real issues in your editorials. Issues that matter to men? How many more times can you talk about building community? I don't think we can build a community here, in K-W., living so close to Toronto. I think it is wasted effort to try. I think it is just polly-filler to keep writing about it and in effect just giving it lip-service. Get into the real issues will you? -- Mike S., K-W

HAVE YOUR SAY

If you have something that you like to say about what you read in *The Voice* or about what is going on in our communities please send a letter to the editor. Write or email us today!

(addresses are on page two)

The Power of Personal Boundaries

By Judy Saltarelli, M.A.



One of the most effective ways to claim your power is to have strong, healthy personal boundaries. Boundaries are tools you can use to overcome oppression, to resist the

negative, homophobic messages so persistent in our culture, and to take in support and nurturing from others. There is a feedback loop between healthy boundaries and self-esteem: self-esteem enables us to have strong boundaries, and strong boundaries in turn enhance self-esteem.

A boundary is like a border or a limit between us and others. Boundaries can be physical, mental, emotional or spiritual. Examples of physical boundaries include our sense of personal space, sexual orientation and privacy. Other physical boundaries may involve clothes, shelter, safety, money, space, noise or smoke pollution, time, etc. Mental and emotional boundaries concern our beliefs, feelings, choices, interests, relationships, responsibilities, respect and so on. Spiritual boundaries relate to religion, spiritual practices, and our connection to our Inner Self and our Higher Power. Within these four domains, we have both receptive boundaries, which are self-protective, and expressive boundaries, which are respectful of others. We have guidelines or belief systems for each type of boundary. For example, a receptive boundary belief could be "it's not ok for anyone to verbally abuse me," and an expressive boundary belief could be "it's not ok for me to verbally abuse others".

We can think of a boundary as being like a wall around us. That wall may be high and thick and built of strong boulders, with no doors or windows, impermeable to all comers. At the other extreme, it may be low and weak and easily breached by anyone. Neither of these

types of boundaries serves us well. While the first type ensures that no one can ever hurt us, it also keeps us isolated from possible intimacy and support. The second leaves us vulnerable to abuse and manipulation. A more desirable wall might be made of bricks and have good windows and a gate with a good lock controlled by us. We can then decide who and what to let in or lock out.

Boundaries are closely related to the psychological "games" we play in our relationships with others. The therapeutic tool I use most often in my counselling practice to look at these games is the Drama Triangle concept developed by Steve Karpman. In the Drama Triangle there are three roles: Persecutor, Rescuer and Victim. All of us play each of these roles from time to time. When we play the role of either Persecutor or

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Rescuer, we violate others' boundaries. When we are in the Victim role, we feel someone has violated one of our boundaries. Psychological games are especially prominent in co-dependent relationships. When we are playing on the Drama Triangle, we are vulnerable to emotional pain and lack of authenticity. The goal is to move off the Triangle altogether, to a frame of mind where we are clear about our power to protect ourselves and about how to respect others as well.

Many of us can readily identify with the Victim role: someone hasn't respected an important boundary and we feel discounted, hurt, oppressed, ignored, abused, or taken advantage of. The Victim's slogan is "poor me!" Sometimes, in search of love or attention, we may actively or passively encourage others to victimize us. Others who are playing either the Persecutor or the Rescuer role need to have a Victim to keep their game going, and they will have little incentive to change their ways voluntarily.

To get off the Victim position, you must change your own behaviour. Focus on clear problem solving. Think about your boundaries and what you need to do to enforce them. Figure out how to get what you need, ask someone to stop doing something hurtful or offensive, ask them to let you figure things out for yourself, or leave (or avoid) a dangerous or toxic situation. Associate with people who are mutually supportive and spend less time with friends or relatives who do not support you. Learn to understand that others do not have the right to define who you are, and that their opinions are simply that. If someone believes you are "bad", that doesn't mean you are bad! The clearer you can be about your needs and safe, effective ways to get them met, the sooner you will stop feeling like a Victim.

It's also easy to recognize the Rescuer in us. Searching for love in a roundabout way, the Rescuer tends to put others' needs first, protecting, advising and carrying feelings for them. The Rescuer feels responsible for others, not responsible to them. The Rescuer's logic (often unconscious) goes like this: if I can only help her/him enough by doing "x" for them,

they will appreciate me (read "love me"). Unfortunately, the Rescuer needs a Victim to rescue. The Rescuer's words and actions are perceived by the recipient as implying weakness or inability: "here, let me do it for you, you poor thing!" The Rescuer's hidden message is that they know better than you what you need. The recipient will often lash out in return. The Rescuer, now feeling like s/he is the Victim, usually says: "I was only trying to help!"

If you recognize Rescuer tendencies in yourself, focus on acknowledging and respecting the other person's responsibility for their own life choices and on nurturing yourself. Show empathy, encourage, confront kindly. Offer help if they ask for it and you are willing to give it. Trust that the other person has 'enough' to make it, and expect them to be responsible for themselves and their own actions. Figure out what you were trying to get for yourself through rescuing, and find clearer ways to get it.

Few of us easily recognize our own Persecutor tendencies. The Persecutor gives others subtle or not so subtle messages that say "you're no good" or "I'm better than you". Some Persecutors are physically abusive, others verbally or emotionally abusive, like an overly critical parent. Persecutors set unnecessarily strict limits, blame and oppress others. They are mobilized by anger. Their language may be all-inclusive ("you always...") or all exclusive ("you never..."). If you see Persecutor traits in yourself, you can eliminate these by setting clear guidelines for how you treat others.

There are a number of excellent books dealing with the concept of boundaries. Two of my favourites are *Boundaries* by Cloud & Townsend, and *Boundaries and Relationships* by Charles Whitfield. The book by Cloud & Townsend is written from a loving, accepting Christian perspective and is an excellent antidote for anyone who was raised in an overly authoritarian, fundamentalist religious culture. Their tone may be a bit much for people who don't share their religious views, yet there is

Continues on page 21

A Time To Remember.
A Time To Reflect.
By Charles W. Westfall



"He was not my gay son. He was my son and he was gay." Dennis Shepard's words hit the mark, hit home and hit where it counts. He was referring to his son, Matt.

Two years ago this month, on a freezing cold night in Laramie Wyoming, Matthew Shepard was left bleeding and bludgeoned and burnt, bound to a log fence. He had been tortured and abused for hours by two thugs who simply hated gays. Matt was only 21. Too young to die. A few days later, though, he did die from his wounds. Doctors had been helpless to do anything, so brutal had the beating been.

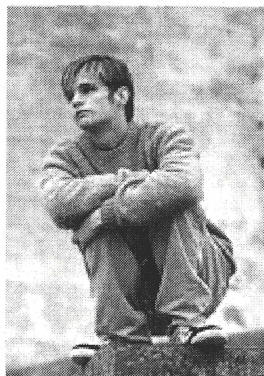
While Matt lay dying in the Laramie hospital, his university was celebrating a homecoming weekend. One of the floats in the parade on that occasion featured a scarecrow-like figure, made to resemble Matt, with an anti-gay obscenity on its back. One can only think that the perpetrators, in this case, were only indulging in a bit of crude, sophomoric humour, with no knowledge of the seriousness of the situation. Nor had they any realization that the images and language we use help to perpetuate intolerance and hatred.

At Matt's funeral, religious conservatives and anti-gay demonstrators, paraded outside the church in which it was held, protesting loudly and visibly against him. They declared he was burning in hell, that all gays deserved to be dead and that God hates him and all gays. They obviously considered the situation serious. They were trying to perpetuate and proliferate intolerance and hatred.

In a very short space of time, however, ma-

major portions of society woke up and became aware of the intensity and peril of the kind of anti-gay sentiment that had cost Matt his life. Memorial walks and vigils were held throughout North America and Europe. Articles and tributes were published and a new kind of mobilization occurred, focusing on the need to eradicate hate crimes of any description.

Since that time, Matt's parents have established the Matthew Shepard Foundation, dedicated precisely to this end. They have, moreover, worked tirelessly in their efforts to promote this cause in memory of their son. A quick search of the internet, using the words, "Matthew Shepard Murder Memorial" will provide an abundance of information about the entire incident and its aftermath.



Matthew Shepard

Matt was, by every account, a gentle and generous person. He was attractive and appealing. He did not deserve to die. No one could ever deserve to die the way he did.

It is ironic, therefore, that factions have arisen that accuse the LGBT community of "using" Matt as a tool towards gaining their own ends. If, indeed, tolerance, peaceful acceptance and greater understanding are selfish ends, then that may be so. In a way, every martyr becomes a stepping stone to a greater enlightenment and better life for those who come after.

Matt's story is an extreme example of what those in our community face. He is by no means the only one. There are countless "little murders" committed every day.

I think of two examples I heard of from young friends here in Hamilton. Openly gay, they had experienced the normal jibes and jokes during their time at school. At the end of their graduating year, however, they were subjected to the ultimate in degradation. They were dragged

into a shower room and urinated on by their classmates.

I have to think of those young persons now populating the streets who have been driven from their homes by families that could not accept, much less love, them because of their sexual identity and orientation. I think of how so many of those persons have been driven to self-abuse through drugs, prostitution or suicide. I can only wonder at how little is, or actually can, be done on their behalf.

I think of my dear friend Richard, a widely published writer in New York City, who was severely beaten by his brothers. It was three years ago, at his mother's birthday party. His sisters, sisters-in-law, mother, father and, yes, his daughter looked on helplessly. His daughter hasn't spoken to him since.

In the light of all this, I want to pay a bit of a tribute to the GLBT Centre at McMaster and Mohawk Pride for their efforts in providing a safe venue for socialization, counselling and discussion on campus. Having lived on University Campuses most of my life, I can assure anyone who doubts it, that such efforts are tremendously important for a growthful and healthy experience. I just wish there were more interaction with the wider community. Such an exchange would be of tremendous mutual benefit.

The Hamilton-Wentworth Public School Board recently introduced a new program in Sex Education. I grew up in a time when the word "Sex" was never mentioned in public and only whispered in private. The new program pulls no punches in telling it like it is, with clinical details and advice for all about counselling, safe sex and the need for understanding and tolerance. Now, I want to see some Gay/Straight Alliance groups started. This kind of face-to-face encounter can do and has done much, in other areas, to foster friendship and understanding between gays and straights within the school system.

PFLAG and The Gay Fathers Group continue to address the issue from the other side: edu-

cating parents and families about the stresses, needs and benefits of what it means to be Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgendered.

Judy and Dennis Shepard, my heart goes out to you at this time. I know you can never forget about the loss you have experienced. It is, however, with sincere admiration, gratitude and pride, that I salute you and others like you. In your efforts to eradicate hate, promote understanding and prevent re-occurrences of the kind of crime that killed Matt, you are setting an example that needs to be supported and imitated everywhere.

So, thank you, Judy and Dennis and, especially Matt. Thank you, not just for the price you have paid. Thank you for the tremendous inspiration and hope you provide for all of us.

In Memoriam: Matthew Shepard 1976 - 1998

Charles W. Westfall is a writer living in Hamilton. This column is a Voice exclusive.



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Local Bar Controversy?

The Robin's Nest
By Douglas Saunders

Editor's Note:

Questions have been raised lately as to the status of The Robin's Nest. There has been concern that it is not a "public bar" anymore and that planning a Saturday night of socialization there may see you turned away if you are not a member. This discussion unfolded on The Rainbow Email list in September. An employee of the bar, Douglas Saunders, responded to the questions and concerns raised in email. His response (edited for space) is included below with his permission and that of the owners of the Robin's Nest.

Background

From its inception, the Robin's Nest Club **has always been a private members club**. This is not a new thing. (Some of you may even recall the old days when members had to show their membership cards, sign-in and guests had to sign a guest register!) However, as the Region of Waterloo moves to enforce the smoking prohibition in "public" establishments it has also cracked down on enforcement of the rules governing private members clubs which **require** that anyone attending such a club be a member or be signed in by a member.

Why limit the number of memberships?

There are very few licensed private members clubs operating without limited memberships. The reason is simple. Every licensed establishment, whether "public" or "private", has a "room capacity" - based largely on fire safety regulations. So, the memberships are limited but there is some flexibility in the numbers to ensure that guests can be signed in.

Does this make the club "elitist"? Well, I won't try to answer that one for you. Everyone will make their own decisions about that. But, the memberships have always been available on a first come first served basis which seems pretty fair to me.

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Are there any exceptions to the guest sign in rules?

Yes. There are two events per year that are operated by advanced ticket sales only. Those are: the Halloween and New Year's Eve dances. Tickets are limited and on sale to members only. Each member who purchases a ticket may purchase only one additional ticket for their partner (or boyfriend, girlfriend, date of the evening). This exception is also not new.

I've heard that memberships are just a way around the "no smoking" by-law. Is this true?

No! As stated two paragraphs above, the club has always been a private members club. In fact, the private membership status of the club was in place long before the Region ever began to consider the prohibition on smoking. It is true that private membership clubs are exempt from enforcement of the by-law.

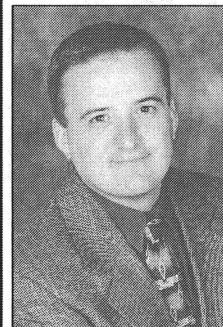
What if you are from out-of-town?

If you are from out of town and have been to the club before and are recognizable to the owners, the door staff or the bar staff we are willing to sign you in as our guests - so long as we have not reached our licensed capacity for the evening. If you are not known to us, you must be signed as a member of a guest.

Summary

Memberships and the Private Members Club designation - ARE NOT NEW they are 20+ YEARS OLD! Guests, to a maximum of three per member, can still be signed in by members and/or staff. The club is not trying to get around the Regional smoking prohibition. Strict enforcement of the memberships and guest sign in requirements is in direct response to direction from the Region of Waterloo by-law enforcement section. Men have always been and continue to be welcome to attend the club.

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The Invasion of Lesbian Culture

By A.J. Mahari



As lesbian culture is further defined we see it being enhanced and shaped by the internet. Overall, this is a good thing. But, ironically, straight men don't seem to be able to "leave it alone" just like in the real world. There is often that attitude, on the part of many straight men that a woman who is a lesbian just hasn't met the "right" man yet or had some 'potentially earth-shattering and orientation-changing sexual experience' with a man -- yet - **GIVE ME A BREAK!**

In March of 1997, Cathie Parsons, of B.C., was frustrated with the lack of "quantity and quality resources in the lesbian online community" as she puts it, decided to form Lesbianfun Enterprises. With her expertise in computers, the internet, and web page design, she wanted to use her skills to help increase lesbian visibility on the internet. Parsons started her business to offer a porn-free and safe, men-free space to lesbians.

Ironically, Lesbianfun Enterprises, launched its first ever "Promote With Pride Not Porn" campaign in March of 1999. This lesbian-owned company was the first to promote Canadian lesbian visibility and content on the internet. In early September of this year Parsons received an email from a Cambridge man, Jim Mills. Mills asked Parsons to check out his web site. Here's where yet another invasion of lesbian culture was discovered.

Mills' web site, www.canadianlesbian.com, is one letter away from a site that Parsons registered and has plans to expand her web presence to- www.candianlesbians.com. Mills' site is billed as a "lesbian porn" site. However his site is not "lesbian" and seems very much aimed at straight guys.

As part of Lesbianfun Enterprises Parsons, among other things, has an email list called, Canadian Lesbians. Shortly after receiving Mills' email asking Parsons if she'd be interested in creating and maintaining a lesbian magazine online on his site Parsons wrote to her list about this. Immediately there was quite an uproar -- justifiably so.

I happened to be a new member to the Canadian Lesbians list. As a lesbian I was disgusted by what I saw at Jim Mills web site. As a person who has never surfed a "porn" site of any kind I wasn't quite sure what to expect. The front page of the web site announces in big bold red letters "Canadian Lesbian" and makes several claims that what follows when one clicks on the links is "lesbian porn". For the sake of this story, only, I clicked through to several other pages on Jim Mills web site. Of note were the many pictures in which women were giving men oral sex. What on earth does that have to do with anything LESBIAN? Did I miss something?

When I contacted Jim Mills, while he did respond, he refused to answer any of my questions. Mills admitted he was a straight man who bought his domain in the practice of domain-mining in order to make a living because he thought it was a far better alternative to being on welfare.

When Mills was contacted by Dr. Chris Dishlin who is also a member of the Canadian Lesbians email list, and who is a facilitator/transsexual psychologist and a glbt activist, and Parsons, among others, his response was that he would take the site down and sell it to the highest bidder. His opening price was \$10,000 (U.S.). Mills expressed a desire to see the site remain Canadian.

On September 26th I went back to site and found that it had been put back with additions. At the same time that I was in email contact with Jim Mills, Dr. Chris Dishlin, was advocating on the behalf of Parsons with several organizations and agencies. Dr. Dishlin communicated directly with Mills in email and was left with the impression that he was, in fact, taking the site down.

When asked what she had done to try to protect her organization from accidentally being associated with Mills' web presence, Parsons said, *"I have checked into copywrite and domain name registration. He bought the name, he owns it, there is nothing I can do to stop him. Unless his website, is identical in content to one of mine, there is nothing I can do."* She is still pursuing legal avenues to explore this situation further. When Dr. Dishlin was asked what had done to try to protect Parsons organization she said, *"He is on our turf. [I have] contacted most of the g/l/b/t newspapers across the country. Contacted the same in radio stations to get the message out to lesbians and advertisers that that site has nothing to do with Cathie's site. I have sent notices around the world on QueerLaw and Lesbian News. I have contacted the Better Business Bureau in Ontario about cyber-squatting and misrepresentation. I had contacted Jim Mills and was lied to several times. He is following textbook cases of cyber-squatting in the US where it is now illegal to cross pre-established copyrights."*

Most lesbians have known for as long as they've been out to themselves that many straight men don't take them seriously. Either that or that many straight men are drawn to lesbians and to their culture and to the things that make them who and what they are. It's one thing to experience this, and the disrespectful invisibility of this in real life where evidence is more intangible and less concrete. It is quite another to see this reality mirrored concretely back on one's computer screen.

The invasion of lesbian culture is quite evident on the internet. What is also quite clear is that for whatever reasons, many straight men just can't seem to leave lesbians to their culture and space.

I asked several lesbians why they think that many straight men, like Jim Mills, just can't leave lesbians alone to pursue their own interests and culture. Here are their responses:

Parsons said, *"Men just dont get it! They think we were placed here to please them or something. They seem to be facinated with lesbians. They fantasize about being with two women. They look at women as sex objects and nothing more. I would like to have the opportunity to explain to these men that "Lesbianism is about womyn loving womyn it has absolutely NOTHING to do with men"*

Dr. Dishlin added, *"Men think they have the right to everything. Nothing is denied to them in society and since women and lesbians are doing things to reclaim their own space, that is making the space of the male ever smaller. It blows their egos."*

SarahRose Werner, a member of the Canadian Lesbians email list had this to say, *"My reaction is anger, because much of the "lesbian" porn on the web is nothing more than a double-dose of heterosexual male porn, four breasts for the price of two. It continues our society's exploitation of the female body."*

"By the very nature of lesbians, we are drawn to each other and have erotic thoughts/dreams, etc. about those who we find attractive. I don't have any interest in seeing gays or hetros having sex or seeing pictures of this. Hence it befuddles me that any male would get their jollies by arranging porno based on their perception of lesbian sex. And I fully agree with other comments questioning whether the people in the pictures are in fact lesbians." replied Betty, also a member of Parsons' email list.

Donna K. asserted, *"There are many men out there who for eons have been exploiting lesbians. It's their attempt to get what they know they cannot have. There is no place for men in the bedrooms, kitchens, boardrooms or yards of lesbian women. No place at all. I hope and wish that some day they will get that through their thick skulls. They are not female. They are not lesbian. They have no place."*

Jill D said, *"I will be categorically sexist here—and say I disapprove—that it is repulsive and offensive—to have men even suggest they might know what is good for me as a lesbian. I do not want Their pornographic imagination in my life—will not support their market—to exploit my sexuality as a means to gratify their sexual fantasy."*

"I can sum up my feelings on this topic in two words: Anger and violation. I'm angry because once again the stereotypical notions of lesbianism is being furhter perpetuated by men. For me being a lesbian is more than sex, its a way of feeling, thinking and acting. Yes, as with any relationship there is a sexual component, but making love is an extension of the feelings I have for my partner, not as a mere act of animal instinct. Most men in my opinion are not interested in discovering what it means to be a lesbian, their interests lie in perpetuating the existing stereotypes, gaining personal sexual gratifaction and trying to gain control and authority over something they know nothing about."

Additionally I feel violated as once again I see a man minimizing my point of view, my choices and my life. I often wonder why men feel the need to invade such an area as lesbianism. Is it because they need to be in control? is it for their own personal gratification?" said Sandy L.

The greatest invasions of lesbian culture are repeated every single time any man thinks his right to space, the almighty dollar, or his culture is any greater than that of any woman. Most lesbians are not content to be invisible anymore. The internet "should" be a "level playing field" upon which there is enough room for everyone. This is not the case here. It only took one very uneducated straight man deciding that it would make more sense for him to profit from the apparent false representation of "lesbian porn" (regardless of how this affects lesbians or the perception others have of them) as opposed to getting a "real" job, for lesbian culture to be invaded yet again. There is a deep sense of violation that what is yours can be so misrepresented and so exploited. Women like Parsons, Dishlin, and all those who participate in the chat rooms she has and on the email lists she runs know all too well just how precious it is to find safe, lesbian-only space.

These questions beg to be asked - How did Mills find Parsons? Did Mills register his domain name before or after he found Parsons' web site? What, other than money could Mills possibly hope to gain from his web site domain? Odd isn't it that we don't find porn sites named "Canadian Gay-Male Porn" hosted, designed and run by straight women? So it goes in this patriarchal world, so it goes. The invasion of lesbianism continues and with each new frontier of life that we develop. So too are we followed by those who would denigrate us with their self-involved and exploitive brand of visible-invisibility and utter violating disrespect.

Ever wonder why lesbians tend to avoid male-dominated space, whether in the LGBT world or the straight world? The answer is simple, women aren't avoiding anything. Lesbian women are just trying to carve out a little space within which they can see themselves mirrored back from an unbroken mirror and not one shard at a time from shattered mirror after shattered mirror.

It is important that we not forget, for those who appreciate porn, that there are many tasteful sites out there that are actually lesbian-owned. They have their niche in lesbian culture. It is men who have no place (other than that of friend, brother, father) in lesbian culture. Will the day ever come when this reality seeps into the 'reality' of the culture-invading straight man?

Of concern is what we can do to protect ourselves from this prevalent invasion of our culture and socialization, generally, and on the internet specifically.

While in the midst of writing this I downloaded my email only to find an incredible "war" being waged on an email list I run, Amazon Community of Emotional Support (Aces). A long-time list member admitted to being a MTF in transition to which many lesbians emailed in and cried foul demanding either I take this person off the list or they'd leave. My response was that those who are in such fear of difference had better leave and that I had no intention of removing a person, who in spite of transition and current biology identifies as a lesbian.

This is a prime example of the damage that straight men playing games on "our turf" does. The fear and mistrust of this MTF person based upon all the intrusive and violating invasions of straight men causes those who have been oppressed (lesbians) to quickly turn the tables and become the oppressors. We have a long way to go in under-

continued on page 23

Starting a Small Business
Part 4: The Financial Plan
By Darren Kregar

This is one section of the business plan that either you will enjoy or absolutely hate; however, it is one of the most important sections of your business plan. Any potential lender or investor will want to be sure that you are able to pay back the money borrowed or provide a favourable return on investment (ROI). This is the section that will determine whether or not your business idea is profitable. You may decide after this point that it may be best not to pursue your venture.

This section will highlight initial capital requirements and also include such items as proposed cash flows for your business, break even analysis, projected balance sheet and income statements and a personal finance statement.

Over the last 5 months we have been looking at the possibility of opening a club in Waterloo for the GLBT community. One of the first goals is to find a location. The location will determine such costs as

rent, property taxes, and utilities. Locations in the downtown area of Waterloo rent for about \$17.00/ square foot/year. We have estimated that the club should be about 5000 square feet. Rent costs per month would amount to \$7083.33 (\$17.00 X 5000 / 12). Utilities are estimated to be \$350.00/month. Depending upon the location, the landlord may include property taxes as part of the rent.

Other monthly expenses will include wages, advertising, supplies, telephone, insurance, any interest on loans, maintenance costs, accounting and professional fees and an allocation for miscellaneous expenses. At the Kitchener Public Library we can obtain financial reports for businesses similar to the type we are opening. Based on this information we can estimate our monthly costs.

Our next goal is to calculate our start-up requirements. Based on the size of the club we can draw

floor plans and estimate how many barstools, chairs and tables we require. We also will need to build a bar, a DJ booth and have a small kitchen installed. Equipment for the bar area and kitchen will need to be determined. Contractors will be required to do renovations as well as plumbing and electrical work. There will be costs relating to vendor permits, building permits and possible incorporation costs for our club. Additional start-up costs will include signs, starting inventory, deposits with public utilities, operating cash equivalent to 2 months of expenses and any advertising and promotion costs for the opening of the club. We estimate that the above start-up costs will total \$65,000.00.

Once all the expense and start-up costs have been estimated, we are ready to calculate breakeven points. Based on research the average mark-up on a sale is 200%. This means that if we buy a product for \$1.00 we should sell it for \$3.00. To calculate our breakeven point, we can use the following formula:

$$\text{Break Even Point} = \frac{\text{Fixed Costs}}{1 - (\text{Variable costs/unit})}$$

Unit Price

Fixed costs are expenses you must pay regardless of whether you make a sale or not. They include management salaries, rent, utilities, insurance and other overhead costs. Variable costs are those costs that vary in proportion to the amount of items sold. Based on research we have found that for every dollar we make 25% goes to

overhead, 30% to wages, 30% to product and 15% to owners. Our fixed costs are estimated to be \$15,000.00. We know for every dollar earned 60% is attributed to variable costs. Therefore we can determine our breakeven point as follows:

$$15,000/[1 - (.60 / 1)] = \$37,500.00$$

Based on our market research, each person who patronizes bars or clubs spends an average of \$25.00 per night. We require 1500 customers per month to break even.

Have I lost you in the numbers yet? We have yet to prepare our monthly cash flows and prepare a projected income statement and balance sheet. To spare you the grief, we will go over these statements next month.

Darren Kregar, a graduate of Wilfrid Laurier University's Diploma in Accounting Program, is the owner of Economical Tax Services in Waterloo. Economical Tax Services has been providing tax preparation, bookkeeping, payroll and business consulting services for over 3 years.

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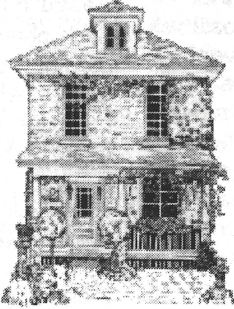
Nun's Hollow

Nunn's Hollow Guest Suites is a gay-owned Bed and Breakfast in Woodstock, Ontario. My partner James and I decided to open our own place in March of 1998. After travelling to many different styles of 'rooms' in Ontario, B.C. and in the South, we thought we could offer something unique. Our best stays, whether gay, lesbian or straight owned, B & B, inn, hotel or even campground, were in places that were professional, spent a lot of energy on the details and were welcoming. Just because a business is gay or lesbian owned does not mean it is a sure thing. We strive to be a quality accommodation first and foremost, gradually improving our rooms, breakfasts and all the little things that make your stay smooth and pleasant.

We call our place "guest suites" because our rooms have private baths and sitting rooms. The Garden suite also has a jacuzzi for two, a fireplace and a screened porch. In fact, the suites occupy a separate apartment in our four-story house. There is a guest-only kitchen, living room and two dining rooms. One of the things we both disliked about travelling to B & B's was prying questions from other guests when still groggy before coffee. Separate dining solves that privacy dilemma at Nunn's Hollow. The other problem was hosts that

insisted separate beds could (and should) be provided for two men. This one doesn't have to be explained when booking at a gay-owned establishment.

James is an upholsterer and refinisher and so our home is full of antiques, comfortable and elegant. Both of us do stained glass so there are some beautiful lamps and windows to enjoy. John is the cook in the house and besides breakfast a romantic dinner for two can be pre-arranged. Classics like rack of lamb and duck to ethnic food like Thai or Mexican or vegetarian



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can be enjoyed.

Our name, Nunn's Hollow, comes from James's maternal grandparents. Their home in Ingersoll was called Nunn's Hollow and was known for the champion roses in their ravine lot. Our garden is similar in that it is a shady grove featured in a garden show and many wedding/ holy union photos.

When opening our business we checked the local competition, the municipal by-laws and registered our business name. A good bookkeeper and understanding of taxation are essential. Perhaps the most important thing is to know what type of business you would like to run, make sure there's a market for it, then set out to achieve it. We aim for an upper scale market as locally we felt there wasn't anything of this nature and it suited our house and us. So as a result we share some very special occasions with our guests- birthdays, anniversaries, wedding/ holy union nights or romantic get-away's.

Woodstock is a picturesque small city with stately buildings and homes. There is a sense of history here and small town calmness yet large enough to provide most amenities. We are a 45 minute drive from either KW or Hamilton and only 25 minutes from Stratford. Please contact us or view or web page if you are interested in staying at Nunn's Hollow. Our address is 21 Delatre Street, Woodstock Ontario. 519-539-9780

www.nunnshollow.on.ca

The Power of Personal Boundaries

Continued from page 9

still much that can be learned from them. Another excellent book is *The Gay and Lesbian Self-Esteem Book: A Guide to Loving Ourselves* by Kimeron Hardin.

It takes a bit (or a lot) of self-examination and determination to create appropriate boundaries for ourselves. My clients consistently report, however, that it is one of the best ways to effectively reclaim their power and happiness. The bottom line is "you're worth it!"

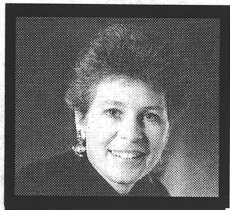
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Judy Saltarelli is a Counselor and Personal Productivity Coach at A Different Way in Waterloo, Ont. This article is a Voice exclusive.

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GAY MONEY

by Bonnie J. Babin,
Investment Planning Counsel of Canada

Choosing a Good Financial Advisor is the Most Important Investment You'll Ever Make

Many people spend more time planning for a vacation or buying a sofa than they do planning for their financial future. When they finally decide it's time to put their financial house in order, they don't know where to start.

Start by getting some professional help. You shouldn't hesitate seeking professional financial advice any more than you would avoid seeking a doctor when you are sick. A professional financial advisor can help you set up a financial plan. He or she can help determine which investments are best suited to achieve your financial goals, establish a savings program to build your assets, and explain potential risks and rewards of different investments.

Probably the most important contribution an independent

financial advisor can make is to help you stick to your plan. Research conducted by Dalbar Financial Services found that during an 11-year period ending June 1995, U.S. investors with a financial advisor held their funds longer and earned almost 17 percent more in total cumulative return on their investments than those who purchased their funds directly.

Finding a financial advisor is no different from finding a doctor. People are willing to give a good reference. Ask your friends and relatives for recommendations. Ask about the advisor's experience, track record, services, investment approach and fees. And don't be afraid to request credentials.

Remember, it's your money and your future. If the person you're considering makes you feel like you're wasting his or her time,

chances are, you're wasting your money.

Interview any financial advisor you're interested in to be sure he or she fits your style and risk tolerance. The candidate must understand your investment needs. He or she must be someone you trust, and someone who can tailor a portfolio to meet your personal requirements. A conscientious planner will use the initial meeting to discuss your financial situation, objectives and risk tolerance level.

If you're ready to get your finances in order, start by investing in professional financial help. Ultimately, seeking out a financial advisor is the most important investment you'll make.

Your comments and suggestions are welcome. Please respond to e-mail [redacted]

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Invasion of Lesbian Culture continued from page 17

standing each other and in extending compassion to each other. It is no longer the case that the definition of a lesbian woman or a gay man can be based solely upon genitalia.

The invasion of lesbian culture, among other things, leads to the kind of fear and anger that can easily produce innocent victims such as a MTF transgendered person in transition. If we support the denial of access to our community for MTF people then we, as lesbians do to them what patriarchy, not to mention Fundamentalist Christians have done to us.

Lesbians need to unite but our unity cannot be exclusive. Let us not give straight men the power to divide us this way. Our culture can only be invaded to the degree that we allow ourselves to become fearful and the degree to which we act on that fear.

While we value lesbian-only space, we must recognize the broadening reality of lesbianism. Where the men who invade our culture are concerned we must take the high road in terms of respecting those who cannot respect us. Each one of us must not allow the continued violating presence of a minority of straight men to cloud her compassionate sense of what it means to be a woman, a lesbian, and an inclusively-tolerant individual.

Where the Jim Mills' of the world are concerned they can only have as much true power or influence upon lesbian culture as lesbians are willing to allow them to have.

Lesbianfun Enterprises has a wealth of services and information online in highly protected lesbian-only space. Check out

www.lesfun.com

The opinions expressed in this column by Ms. Mahari, are those of Ms. Mahari, only, and are not made from any editorial standpoint of The Voice Magazine.

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Sundays

Westminster United Church (an affirming congregation): Services are held each Sunday at 10:30 am. at 543 Beachwood Dr. in Waterloo.

AWARE K-W : Christian gay-positive group Meets every 2nd Sunday of each month. For more information, call Gary at [redacted] or Fred at [redacted]

KW-Friends of Dorothy, 10 Pin Cosmic Bowling. Sundays. For more information call Katherine Sherer at (519) [redacted] or Mark Raymond at (519) [redacted]

Mondays

The Lesbian Discussion Group meets on the first and third Monday of each month. For more information call [redacted] or email: [redacted]

www.thevoice.on.ca Lesbian Groups

Tuesdays

Guelph Queer Equality (GQE) meets every Tuesday from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in UC536, the University Centre's Mature Student Lounge at the University of Guelph. Contact GQE at: gqe@uoguelph.ca for details.

Wednesdays

Hamilton Coming Out Proud Discussion Group meets every first and third Wednesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30 pm. Call us for more details: 905-526-1074, toll-free 1-888-338-8278 - info@gomorrah.com

Rainbow Chorus: Holds rehearsals every Wednesday Night. The first rehearsal of the new season is Wednesday September 6th, 7:30-9:30 pm at the Guelph Unitarian Fellowship, 122 Harris St. at York Rd., Guelph. For more information call Robert at [redacted] or [redacted]
<http://www.webpoint.net/~cory>

Discussion Group: A group for people aged 16-25, sponsored by ACKWA and held in Waterloo, 7:00-9:00 pm. To join, or for more information, call ACKWA at (519) 570-3687

GLOW's Coming Out Discussion Groups explore issues in sexual orientation; Hagey Hall Rms. 373/378, University of Waterloo, 7:30-9:00 pm. Information: 884-4569. **A social gathering follows the discussion groups weekly from 9pm to 11 pm.**

THE COMING OUT DISCUSSION GROUP

- Wed Oct 4 - How Do I Meet People?
- Wed Oct 11- Bisexuality
- Wed Oct 18- Fitting in - feeling left out
- Wed Oct 25- Gender Roles

RPC'S RAINBOW COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP

- Wed Oct 4 - Online - Hinderece or help?
- Wed Oct 11 - Delta Queer -Stereotypes
- Wed Oct 18 - Queer Spirituality
Guest Speaker
- Wed Oct 25- EhBC - (kink) Guests
- Wed Nov 1- Aging as a Queer

NOTE: Women For Sobriety - is no longer in operation.

Alice's Dinner Club, a Hamilton gay and lesbian group of food connoisseurs meets every 2nd Wednesday at 6:15 pm. For information call Joan/Barb at [redacted] or Michael at [redacted]

Thursdays

Hamilton Transsexual Peer Support Group (FTM - MTF) If you are post-op or pre-op transsexual or are dealing with gender dysphoria, come join this bi-weekly peer support group. 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the Hamilton AIDS Network, 512 James St. N. For further details, please call (905) [redacted] ext.43, or e-mail Janet at: [redacted]
www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/cafe/8922/

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Info Line: 519-570-2406

Toll Free: 1-877-635-2352

KITCHENER-WATERLOO

ACCKWA (The Aids Committee of Cambridge, K-W and Area) 85 Frederick St. E., Kitchener, Ont., (519) 570-3687

Anselma House: A crisis shelter for abused women with or without children. 24 hour crisis line: (519) 742-5894

Brethren Mennonite Council For Gays and Lesbians, P.O. Box 43031, Eastwood Square, Kitchener, Ont, N2H 6S9

NEW: Coffee Club - Attention: Lesbian and Gays -- If you like to drink coffee and just chat but you don't feel like there is anyplace to go where you can just be yourself, now there is. For more information call - Peter at [REDACTED]

Global: is available to help anyone in the Laurier community who is dealing with LGBT issues. Staff, students, or faculty can reach GLOBAL directly at the club's e-mail address 00global@mach1.wlu.ca Laurier Peer Help Line 884-PEER.

GLOW Phone Line: 884-GLOW. Information and peer support.

K-W Distress Line- (519) 745-1166

NEW L.O.O.K - Lesbian Open Outreach Kitchener is a supportive and social organization for lesbian/lesbian positive and bi-sexual women in the K-W area. Contact AJ Mahari at [REDACTED]

email: [REDACTED]

or [REDACTED]

www.thevoice.on.ca

Click on [Lesbian Groups](#)

Sexual Assault Center:

KW.....(519)741-8633

Waterloo Region Alliance For Equal Rights-Kitchener-(519) 743-[REDACTED]

Women's Centers: UofW (519) 888-[REDACTED] ext. 3457

WOODS: Women Out Opening Doors Socially is a social club for lesbians in K-W and area. In Kitchener call [REDACTED] In Guelph call Debbie at [REDACTED]

GUELPH

ACGWC (Aids Committee of Guelph and Wellington County) 2 Quebec St, Suite 206, Guelph Ont., (519) 763-2255

GUELPH QUEER EQUALITY (GQE) University of Guelph - gqe@uoguelph.ca

HOWL: Hanging Out With Lesbians is a social group for women (lesbian, bisexual, transgender and gay friendly) ages 25 and up who are active in Guelph and area. Women may contact HOWL through Outline (519) 836-4550

Outline: A support and resource phone line for people dealing with LGBT issues at the University of Guelph. Phone lines are closed Wednesdays and Saturdays (for the summer) Open 7 to 10 pm other evenings. Call (519) 836-4550.

outline@uoguelph.ca

www.uoguelph.ca/~outline

Rainbow Chorus: is a choir that performs and will also be **hosting dances for the LGBT community starting again in September.** For information you can contact Robert at [REDACTED] or Cory at [REDACTED] <http://www.webpoint.net/~cory>

Sexual Assault Center:

Guelph.....(519)823-5806

CAMBRIDGE

Sexual Assault Center:

Cambridge.....(519)658-0551

If you have a group or an organization that you would like listed here please call, write, or email us at The Voice. (contact addresses are on page 2)

HAMILTON

Alcoholics Anonymous--For the location and time of the Gay, Lesbian and Alternative Lifestyles Group in Hamilton call: (905) 522-8399.

Alternatives for Youth- 126 James St. South, Hamilton - 527-[REDACTED]

Anonymous HIV testing by appointment 905-546-3541--walk-in sites:YWCA--75 McNab Street Hamilton, Ontario Wednesdays 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. 905-546-3541 for more information Hamilton General Hospital Outpatient Department Thursdays, 3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. 905-546-3541 for information

Community Education 546-3541 to book a presentation or consultation

Emmanuel House Palliative Care Good Shepherd Centres (905) 308-8401

Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Centre at McMaster University, Hamilton Hall Room 412 - Call 525-9140, ext. 27397

Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Youth Line 1-800-268-9688

Gay Fathers Support Group-3rd Tuesday of each month. For information Call 522-[REDACTED]

Greater Hamilton Gay & Lesbian Business Association (905) 526-[REDACTED]

GLBT Centre at McMaster Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:30 to 4:30 at Hamilton Hall, Room 412. (905) 525-9140, Ext. 27397 or e-mail: glbt@msu.mcmaster.ca www.msu.mcmaster.ca/services/glbt/glbt.htm

Hamilton Aids Network -- 528-0854 Anonymous Testing for HIV appointment only --546-3541

Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police--General Assistance: 546-4925 Jane Mulkewich, GLBT Task Force 546-4910 Complaints against Officers 546-4776 Street Crime/Hate Crime: 546-3831

Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Public Health Department--Sexually Transmitted Disease Services, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4 to 5:30 pm. A walk-in clinic; no Health Card required. Hamilton General Hospital, Outpatient Clinic

Kindred Spirits:a social and recreational group for lesbians and bi-sexual women in the Hamilton/Burlington/Niagara area. For further information please call (905) 541-[REDACTED] or: [REDACTED]@hotmail.com

Narcotics Anonymous Hamilton: (905) 522-0332 **Brantford:** (519) 759-2558 **St. Catharines:** (905) 685-0075

PFLAG--Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians & Gays. For information call 662-1510

Sexual Assault Center: Hamilton.....(905)525-4162

Sexual Health Information Line 905-528-5894--Confidential telephone counselling and information provided by a Public Health Nurse regarding sexual health issues--M-F 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m

Street Health Centre-- Wesley Centre 777-7852

The Golden Horseshoe Leather Association (Hamilton) Monthly meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month & there is a bar night on the second Saturday of each month. Men interested in the Leather/ Denim lifestyle are invited to attend both. For more information email Bill at: [REDACTED]

Women's Centre of Hamilton-75 MacNab Street South, Hamilton 522-0127

Oct 2 & Oct 16

Lesbian Discussion Group gets together in the Student Life Centre on the UofW campus from 7-9:30pm. For more information call AJ at [REDACTED]. **This group now meets twice monthly - the first and third Monday of each month.**

Friday October 13

GLBT Community Monthly Dance at the CAW Hall, 611 Silvercreek Parkway North, Guelph. Doors open at 9:00 pm. Presented by the Rainbow Chorus. Contact Robert at [REDACTED] or phone (519) [REDACTED] for more information. www.members.home.com/rainbow.chorus/. The next dance is on November 10th!

Friday October 20

PFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) meet at 8:00 pm. PFLAG is a support group for people who are learning to understand and come to terms with the sexual orientation of family members or friends in a confidential and supportive atmosphere. For more information, call Evie at [REDACTED] (Kitchener) or Sue at (519) [REDACTED] (Cambridge)

or email pflag@rainbow.on.ca

Sunday October 22

Lesbian Open Outreach Kitchener (L.O.O.K.) is having a Pot-Luck. Why not come out and meet new friends. Join this growing group of lesbian women. For information and directions call A.J. at (519) [REDACTED]

or
email [REDACTED]

Fri Oct 26 - Sun Oct 29

The Everything To Do With SEX Show, a naughty but nice trade show, runs from October 26-29, 2000, in the Automotive Building, Exhibition Place, Toronto. Tickets to the show are \$13 and are available through TicketMaster at 416-870-8000. Visit the website at www.everythingtodowithsex.com. Admittance is restricted to ages 19 and over

Special thanks to David Welbourn for his compilation of community events online at The Rainbow Community Center.

www.rainbow.on.ca

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B R A N T F O R D

A Rainbow of Hope.
Brant County HIV/AIDS Support Group. Call 753-4937 ext.261 for information. All calls confidential.

GBLT adult social/support group of Brantford and area. A safe place to meet people and be yourself. call 752-5132 ext.34

GBLT youth support group of Brantford and area. 753-4937 EXT 261

Pine tree Native Centre Of Brant Presents: PFLAG... Parents, Families & friends of Lesbians & gays Support group meetings held 3rd Tuesday each month. 7:00-8:30pm. all welcome. call 752-5132 ext.34 for details.

The Coalition for gay, bisexual, lesbian and transgendered youth of Brantford and area. (519)753-4937 ext.261. call and leave message. All calls will be returned. We advocate for you.

For any further information about events in Brantford email: [REDACTED]@yahoo.ca



THE VOICE MAGAZINE ONLINE

www.thevoice.on.ca

Join the over 400 visitors to our site monthly. Read archived articles, the current issues's articles or keep up to date on the latest Gay News around the world.

email: [REDACTED]

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Friday 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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Sunday 12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m.

TEA-CADDY SPOONS - The caddy spoon is a short-stemmed silver tea scoop that was first used about 1770. The caddy spoon had a short handle and was kept inside the tea canister. Some caddy spoons were shaped like shells, grape leaves, shovels, feathers, jockey caps, eagles, flour scoops, and leaves. They were made until the end of the eighteenth century, and went out of style after that time.

SUGAR TONGS - During the eighteenth century sugar was usually purchased by the loaf, and a sugar nipper was used to cut the large lump into usable pieces. The early-eighteenth-century sugar tongs resemble scissors with a spoon like end. The bow-shaped tongs that resemble two spoons joined by an arch were made after 1750. Many varieties of the nineteenth century tongs were made to match the pattern of the silver tableware.

Cruising

By Julie Casto (Travel Only)

A cruise is lively and exciting, yet serene and relaxing; romantic and glamorous, yet interesting and broadening; elegant and luxurious, yet casual and economical; gregarious and convivial/ yet intimate and private,

A cruise is truly a unique travel experience - the ultimate escape from reality.

Taking a cruise vacation is partaking in a varied program of exciting activities with interesting and congenial fellow passengers from diverse walks of life. It may be unwinding and relaxing in comfort, posh surroundings with an impressive variety of facilities and modern conveniences. It is travelling to exotic ports of call, viewing breathtaking scenery, and exploring historic points of interest. It is a cool dip in the pool, breakfast in bed, a relaxing sauna and massage, moonlit walks on deck, costume balls, movies, bridge tournaments, games, entertainment, cocktail parties, shopping, sunning, dancing, romance, companionship - and best of all, this can be yours for less than you would spend on any comparable vacation.

The price of any cruise will vary on the basis of your accommodations, economy-conscious travellers who book minimum cabins can obtain the best possible buy for their vacation, dollar.

One of the most unique characteristics of the cruise vacation is that everything is conveniently located aboard ship. You are afforded the opportunity to visit many glamorous and diverse foreign countries without the necessity of lugging around heavy baggage, waiting in line at several airports and constantly changing hotels.

Cruising has grown in popularity in the past few decades. New modern luxury liners are

being built. Today's cruise offers something for just about everyone. — young and old, singles and couples, adults and children.

Those who desire recreation can participate in a diverse range of events, while those who wish to relax can sit back and let the experienced staff and crew serve and entertain them. The athletic types can join the exercise class, workout in the gym, jog around the deck, and on shore swim, play tennis, or catch a fast eighteen holes of golf; while the spectator types can watch a movie, attend a lecture, or view the nightly entertainment.

You can choose a one week cruise, or a three or four month cruise around the world, The choices are endless!"



Julie Casto

Ph 519-620- [REDACTED]

gc@execulink.com

Head Office

389 COLBORNE ST.
BRANTFORD, ONTARIO
N3S 3N4

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www.travelonly.on.ca

CLIA - IATA



COPYWRITE BY OF.COLE 2000

WRITTEN BY: FINNIAN COLE

ART BY: [REDACTED]

"Lesbianism, politically organised, is the greatest threat to male supremacy." — Rita Mae Brown

"I heard that in the hierarchy of reincarnation, the lowest form is a heterosexual man. Then as you go up the ladder, the highest reincarnation form is a lesbian." —Melissa Etheridge

"Some of us are becoming the men we wanted to marry." —Gloria Steinem

"Women can be close without being sexual, sexual without being passionate, passionate without being erotic, erotic without making a physical claim to the beloved, and they can be all these things together with such subtle sensual passage from laughter to confession to whispered intimacy that no one in the world could say where friendship leaves off and love begins." —Kim Chernin

"If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again." —Sojourner Truth

With Heather Bishop - Part 1 of 2

By Ms. A.J. Mahari

Heather Bishop's latest CD, "Heather Bishop Live" is not just a CD it is a journey that challenges the listener to a profoundly-personal experience. An experience that is both entertaining and thought-provoking.

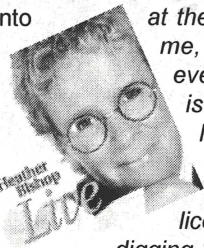
A talented singer-songwriter and a very intelligent and reflective lady, Heather Bishop is a delight to talk with and to interview.

Heather Bishop told me that she put a lot of herself into her latest CD. Bishop put a lot of thought into the songs that she chose to include on her new CD, **Heather Bishop Live**. She said that many people have expressed to her that she should do an album of covers (sing other people's songs) of old standards. She had written a bunch of songs that she really wanted to record that spanned the gamut from heart-wrenching songs to very funny songs that would work the best with a live audience. She thought it over and realized that what she most wanted to do before she did anything else was to put a CD together of the songs she's been doing in concert and that she really loves. "I slipped in a couple of other songs, like 'Cry' and 'Take Me Tonight' that are a bit of an indication of where I would go if I did a cover-tune album" Bishop explained. Included on the new CD is Heather singing 'The Tennessee Waltz'. When asked why she include that song, Bishop said, "It's

very nostalgic to me because when I first started in this business it was in a women's band in the early early '70's and that's one of the songs we used to do."

When asked if she has a favourite song from this CD, Bishop said she has two favourites, "one song that isn't mine, and that is "All Is Well". *When I first heard that song I was at very difficult place in my own personal journey and that song felt like one of those songs that was written for me. I sing it on the road, at the end of shows, just for me, to remind myself that everything in the universe is unfolding as it should - I'm okay, I'm fine. Interestingly too, when I was getting the mechanical licences I had to do a bit of digging to find the woman who wrote it. I sent off a letter asking to do the song and to arrange payment for it. It took a couple of months and then I got an answer back that this woman had passed on. Then the song just took on that much more meaning for me because I really felt like I understood her journey. It's a song that falls into the category of I wish I wrote that."*

Bishop's other favourite song on her new CD is "The Letter". "It's a song that I had been carrying around in my heart for many years and didn't quite know how to write. Then I was asked to sing for the International Aids Day last December. I knew then that it was time for me to write that song. It's a really diffi-



cult song for me to sing, to get through live without crying but for me the song speaks about the need for honesty and integrity in our lives because when it all comes down to it, what does it all mean? That mother, in the song, like all mothers, when all is said and done, would have rather had her son than lost him." I found this song so incredibly moving. Bishop added, "It makes everyone weep."

The song, "The Letter" also speaks to the messages that are present in other songs of Bishop's on this CD too. The theme that life is such a gift, and that so much is lost if we allow the exterior aspects of our lives to take over our hearts. "That's right, the movie. And you know what, it's never your movie, it's always somebody else's movie."

If you do your part, you're in their movie. If you don't, guess what, the movie doesn't go on. In my life, my goal is to be able to stand back and not get drawn into everybody else's drama. And that's the biggest challenge, eh, not to get engaged by all this external stuff and just stay in touch with yourself and what's in you."

I responded to Heather that what she had just shared about not engaging in the drama of life that goes on around us must be quite a challenge for her given her career and popularity. Her response: "It sure has been over the years. I am very grateful for age because age gives you, I think, a better chance to maintain some distance from that. When I talk to young people com-



MJG Productions Presents

Heather Bishop & Connie Kaldor in concert!

One of two exclusive shows only in Ontario!



Friday, November 10, (8:00 p.m.)

Emmanuel United Church

22 Bridgeport Road West, Waterloo

General Admission Tickets: \$17 (adv); \$20 (door). On sale in Waterloo at Words Worth Books (100 King Street South), in Toronto at Wonder Works (79 Harbord Street).

Phone Orders: 1-800-265-0710 (Sanderson Centre Box Office)

Note: Connie & Heather are also performing Sat November 11, in Toronto.

Concert Web Site: www.sentex.net/mja/ckhb/index.htm

Coming Soon: Lucie Blue Trembla, February, 2001 in Waterloo and Toronto.

ing into this business one of the first things I want them to understand is the hard-ass things. If you come into this business thinking that you are here to hit the big time you're going to have a very disappointing life. The odds of having a successful career in music are much like the odds when you go to a casino to gamble. So think about why you are doing music. If you are doing it because music chose you and because it's in your heart and you couldn't live without doing it -- and you are doing that in whatever form that is -- whether that's just playing for yourself, being a music teacher, or being a touring musician -- whatever that is it is all equally valid and important.

For me, because I came out, the first stage I hit as a solo artist - I came out, and that was in 1976. I decided, even before I went out on stage that this will be the shortest-lived career in history. But I was amazed that people accepted me and my career in that way has been such an amazement. Because I was out I just figured, well the big-time will never be there for you and I saved myself so much heartache. Which doesn't mean I haven't always gone for musical integrity, you

know, and really work on my craft and really try to be as excellent an entertainer as I could. I just know so many musicians are so disappointed later in life because they never got covered, and they are brilliant - never is it because you're not brilliant."

When I asked Heather why she does what she does, and what music is about for her she said that for her music is about feelings and that she wouldn't have said or really known that years ago. She has come to understand that over the years. Bishop says her music is about healing others and added that, "Ultimately in the end, like anything we do, it's about healing myself."

Bishop talked about being thankful for the perspective and healing of age and that lead me to share with Heather that the first time I listened to her new CD I was actually doing some cleaning and just trying to get a feel for it and I stopped right in my tracks to listen to the song, "Aging Grace" because I'm aging too, of course, and the song really spoke to me. I really appreciated the humour in that song. I asked Heather

how she is so able to mix both important relevant issues and such wonderful humour.

Heather's reply: "It comes from my own life. It comes from personal experiences. And I've just been so relieved, to tell you the truth, to see that everybody else has the same problems. Once you hit about 45 it just gets funnier and if you don't laugh at it, you'll just lose it."

At one point in the song "Aging Grace" Bishop just stops singing and playing as she jokingly puts on that she's totally forgotten the song and the words and what the heck she was doing. I asked her if it is a challenge, for real, to remember all of the songs she performs and their words. Bishop replied, "It's a huge challenge and in fact I do the song early in the show and I like to make a joke about it in case I make some mistakes. Okay, I'm over 50 now folks, here we go..."

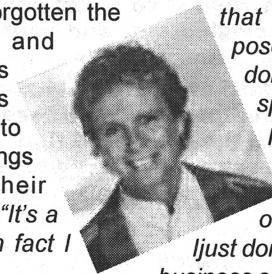
Another of the very entertaining songs on Heather Bishop Live is called, "Cyberlove" which I told her reminded me of a song from her Day Dream Me Home CD called "If You Leave Me Darlin" They are both in the same vein or style. I asked Bishop if "Cyberlove", like "If you Leave Me Darlin" are as much fun to perform as they are to listen to. "Yes. I did that song because a friend of mine, this last winter, went on the internet to find me some information about women's music and ended up in a chat room." Bishop's friend had never been in a chat room before and neither had the woman she was talking to and yet these two women quickly realized that they had an incredible amount

in common. After a few months the woman that Bishop's friend was talking to has moved to Manitoba now and the two are as happy as can be. Bishop added, "When I sing the song, inevitably, I have a couple come up and say, 'that's how we met'. I then responded by saying that perhaps I should give the online world another try, Bishop and I laughed and she advised me to, "be careful now there girl!"

When asked what her general take on the internet is Bishop said, "I don't know. My general take is that computers were supposed to save us time and I don't believe they do. We spend more time on computers now than we would have just sitting down and writing things out. I don't surf the net. I just don't have time. The whole business about mp3 sites and what the internet can do for musicians - I'm just waiting to see and I have no idea where that will go. Due to my age I am looking at it more from a perspective of curiosity rather than what's my next business move."

Heather Bishop is a very honest, spiritual and down-to-earth woman who I very much enjoyed talking with. Part two of this interview will be featured in the November issue of The Voice along with an interview that I did in mid-September with one of Heather Bishop's best friends, and a well-known singer/songwriter herself, Connie Kaldor.

Connie Kaldor and Heather Bishop will be in concert together for two shows. One in Waterloo, on Friday November 10 and on in Toronto on Saturday November 11.

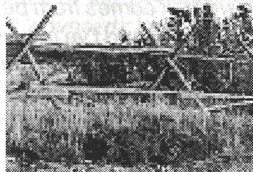


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Matthew Shepard



Light a candle for Matthew, and keep it ever burning in your heart

1976 to 1998

We have come to realize that increasingly, if you do not fit the accepted norm with regard to what many in society feel is acceptable, you are singled out, and very possibly persecuted for it.

Let us never forget Matthew and what happened to him, or his courageous parents who despite their grief, managed to face the public and fight not only for justice, but for the cause of ending hate related violence. We may lose some battles, but we must not lose this war!



The Matthew Shepard Foundation

Every life needs meaning. Every death needs meaning. The life and death of Matthew Shepard will continue to have meaning through the establishment of the Matthew Shepard Foundation. The Shepard family has created this Foundation to help people abandon ignorance, prejudice and hate. The Foundation will be dedicated to the principle of helping people move beyond tolerance to embrace and rejoice in diversity.

In conjunction with the Matthew Shepard memorial fund, resources will be devoted to public awareness and education programs to ensure that what Matt lived for and believed in will help others believe as well.

This work will take the efforts of many. We hope that many will share their efforts and their resources so that many may share Matt's vision — life is precious, we can work together to help each life have meaning and dignity.

Judy Shepard

Judy Shepard
PO Box [REDACTED]
Casper, WY 82604
(307) [REDACTED]
Email:
[REDACTED]

The Shepards have set up their own memorial web site for Matthew.

<http://www.matthewsplace.com/>

Matthew Shepard Memorial Quilt

It is very unfortunate that we live in a society where a quilt such as this even needs to be made, however, on July 29, 2000, the Matthew Shepard Memorial quilt was presented to Mrs. Judy



Shepard by Monie Gebhart and David Lehning, in some fashion similar to the AIDS quilt.

Lesbian #2 on UK's Big Brother

She missed the cash prize by a fraction, but the reality show's lesbian sweetheart scored points for tolerance just like her "surviving" U.S. counterpart.

As mad as the U.S. went for Survivor, Britain went for its version of the series Big Brother, and while lesbian former nun trainee Anna Nolan came in only a very close second in September 15's final vote, she may have had some of the same impact for acceptance that gay Survivor victor Richard Hatch had — her sexual orientation was simply taken for granted. Megan Radclyffe, TV writer for London's Gay Times, told The Observer that, "What Anna has done has changed everything. We have had lesbian characters like [lesbian comic] Rhona Cameron in Rhona and lesbian kisses with Anna Friel in Brookside. There was even a lesbian couple in Queer As Folk, but we haven't had openly gay real women on TV — until now. Anna was totally open about her sexuality and over 10 weeks got almost half the votes of millions of people who phoned in. Lesbians used to feel like the freaks at the bottom of the pile. She's made lesbians look like the way most really are — normal, funny, intelligent, modest."

Well before the final vote, more Britons had voted by phone for who should stay and who should go from the Big Brother house than voted in the last election for Members of the European Parliament. On the final night alone, more than ten million people tuned into the show (a 56.5% audience share, and Channel 4's second-biggest audience of all time), and almost two-thirds of the show's viewers were women. Hundreds of women told a helpline set up for the audience things like, "I have got crushes on other girls at school and she makes me feel OK about it." Among the messages Anna received was one from her favorite actress Kathy Burke, reportedly reading, "Dearest darling Anna, if you want to come

round for a cup of tea and a feel of my tits, you would be more than welcome."

On her release after ten weeks in the house, Dublin-born Anna, 29, said she "had not expected to become a role model for lesbians, nor Britain's most famous lesbian," but that she was "happy if anything I do or represent helps anyone else in a similar position."

Despite heavy rain, thunder and lightning, a crowd of 2,000 had gathered around the specially-built Big Brother house for the release of its denizens, many fans having traveled considerable distances to demonstrate their support for Anna and weeping at her loss by only about 2% of the public vote (3,539,683 - 3,414,979, more than 1 in 12 Britons participating). "We love Anna," one sign proclaimed.

The hardest part of participating on the show for Anna was being separated from her partner Tania Paice, not being allowed to talk with her or anyone else from her life. On the show Anna was often seen wearing a T-shirt with a "T" and "10/9," signifying Tania and their anniversary. They spent Anna's first night of freedom just talking, catching up. They should have a chance to do more of that while enjoying Anna's second prize, a week in Barbados and a week in St. Lucia.

Anna was an early favorite among oddsmakers after revealing that she'd left the convent because she is a lesbian and that the possessions she'd brought with her into the house were a violin, slippers and a vibrator.

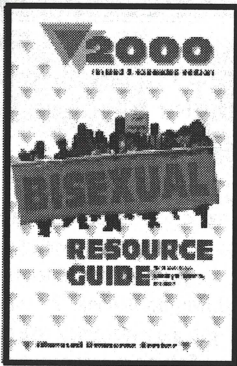
Bisexual Resource Guide

by Robyn Ochs

Paperback
January
1999
304 pages

This book has listings of 2100 (or so) bi and bi-inclusive organizations in 50 (or so) countries, annotated bibliographies and film guide, great quotes, photos. Something for everyone.

This 3rd Edition of the Bisexual Resource Guide is the most comprehensive directory ever. Every kind of bisexual and bi-inclusive organization in the world is here. If you are bisexual, this book is your life-line to a supportive and accepting bisexual culture - If you belong to a LGBT organization, you need this book in your office. If you provide services to bisexual clients, this is the reference you need. If someone you love is bisexual, you have found the perfect gift.



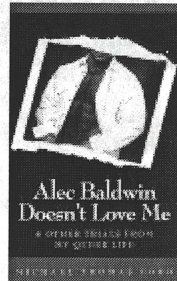
Alec Baldwin Doesn't Love Me and Other Trials of My Queer Life

by Michael Thomas Ford

Paperback
January 1998
256 pages

The short humorous essay is a form that few writers can master. Sure, pithy and funny are easy enough (if you are, in fact, pithy and funny), but the failings of most humorous essays come from a lack of seriousness. Humor is most effective when the writing articulates a clear, thoughtful point of view.

His ironic view of a world that keeps threatening to be wonderful but never quite succeeds dovetails perfectly with his desire for world peace, freedom for gay people, and better sex. Witty, funny, and surprisingly moving, Michael Thomas Ford explains life to us and it actually begins to make sense.



Admission Accomplished: The Lesbian Nation Years, 1970-75 (High Risk Books)

by Jill Johnston



These dated Village Voice columns might never have resurrected themselves if the perpetually adolescent Johnston (Jasper Johns: Privileged Information, 1996)

were not a lesbian separatist, and if it weren't perennially hip to be contrarian. Johnston is, as she says with such overbearing glee, "hopelessly narcissistic." Of course, being a self-styled revolutionary, she considers monogamy an "archaic form of bondage" and the mother-daughter bond one of "elephantal cuntsequence." As a "lesbian chauvinist," naturally, she asserts that "all women are lesbi-

ans except those who don't know it yet," and in the caustic style so typical of this book she barks that "women don't like to be fucked by men any more and in fact never did." She thinks it fiendishly Joycean to parody Catholic liturgy as follows: "Maria, full of grease, the load is with me!" Thankfully, Johnston has given up her Gertrude Stein act of late and gone on to finer things than the joys of groupie fame--that is, biography and criticism, those quaint arts of writing about other people.

"Be not afraid of going slowly, be afraid only of standing still." -- Chinese Proverb

"I know that life can't be lived on hope alone, but it can't be lived without it."

-- Harvey Milk

"One of these days I'm going to put Band-Aids across my mouth so that smiling will become less of a reflex in uncomfortable situations." --Ingrid Bengis

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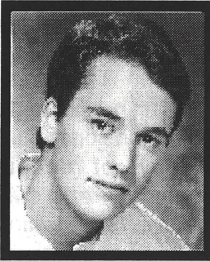
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Roanoke tragedy hits close to home

by Kirk Read



There are bullet holes in my history. Backstreet Cafe was the first gay bar I ever went to. I was 16. I got turned away from the Park, the gay club down the street, but they let me stay at Backstreet. I drank Sprite and played pool. The bartender called me "Sugar" and ran her fingers through my hair like a mother picking ticks. I felt like I'd come home. Over the years, I've gone to Backstreet whenever I visited my mother in nearby Lexington. It was always full of working class folks, far from the plastic ghettos of urban gay epi-centers. I used to sit at the bar and write for hours.

On September 23, Ronald Gay went into a Roanoke watering hole and asked where the gay bar was. He got directions, then showed off a handgun and said he was going to "waste some faggots." The bartender called 911. Gay went to Backstreet, a few blocks down Salem Avenue. When he saw two men hugging, he pulled out his gun and shot seven people. Danny Lee Overstreet, a 43 year-old telephone

operator, was killed. One woman's in critical condition and five others were hospitalized.

Ronald Gay, the man arrested in the shooting, is a sad case. According to reports, he has five ex-wives and he's heard faggot jokes all his life. When he introduces himself to people, he quickly adds that he's not gay. His house just burned down. His last ex-wife says he was on Prozac and Clonipin, an anti-anxiety med. He was a hard drinker who never recovered from picking

up body parts in Vietnam. He was on military disability and should have been institutionalized a long time ago.

Calling this a hate crime really misses the point. This was an act of despair. This was a man with an intimate understanding of anti-gay prejudice. He lashed out after years of abuse. I've harbored day-dreams about opening fire on the kids who called me faggot in school,

the people who pushed me into lockers and made me too scared to take a shower after gym. Ronald Gay lived out that dark fantasy. But, in a sense, he took out that anger on his own people. It's as sad as the L.A. Riots.

Folks are rallying in Roanoke, go-

Ronald Gay, like it or not, was a member of the gay community. He's one of countless non-gay people who have been taunted all their lives either because of their name or because people think they're gay. Unfortunately, he turned his rage on the very people who could have understood that.

ing to church together, holding vigils, and starting victim relief funds. This is the same town where men are banding together to fight police entrapment arrests in Wasena Park. It's the same town where over 1,000 people came together last week for a Gay Pride celebration. It's the same town that was the closest thing to civilization for me when I was growing up.

People are using this tragedy as a springboard for a hate crimes law, which seems like the obvious thing to do. I'm delighted to see people organizing politically, but Virginia is a long way off from passing a hate crimes bill. It hasn't even made it out of committee yet.

Virginia is a law and order kind of state. It's easier to make an example of individuals than it is for the state to really address how kids are taught to be violent homophobes at home and at school. What about the teachers who look the other way when kids get beaten at school? What about the principals who hear the word "faggot" and let it go because boys will be boys? Adding jail time doesn't begin to address the fact that adults teach children to hate.

The purpose of hate crimes laws is to raise awareness with lawmakers and constituents, but they don't prevent violence. The sort of desperation involved in opening fire on a room full of strangers isn't quelled by goodwill statutes. Virginia is a death penalty state. If Ronald Gay wasn't deterred by the imminence of an electric chair, why would he think twice because of 18 more months in prison? Getting additional penalties because the victim

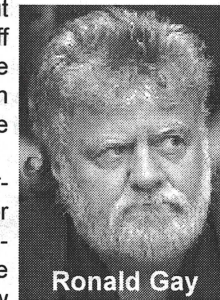
is gay seems to be the same kind of special rights crap that we're always accused of peddling. A bullet is a bullet is a bullet.

What we really need here need is education. Kids need to learn early that if they use the word "faggot" or act violently they'll get suspended or expelled. Kids need solid sex education that tells the truth about gay people. Kids need to be taught that prejudice is wrong. If we're going to make a dent in this problem, we have to boldly go where this movement is most terrified of going: into elementary schools. We have to recruit kids to be kind to one another.

The media won't make a martyr out of Danny Lee Overstreet because he wasn't as camera friendly as Matthew Shepard. We will forget his name just as we've forgotten the name of Henry Edward Northington, a homeless man who was beheaded in Virginia, just as we've forgotten the names of dozens of transgender people whose stories barely make it into the press. We forget their names. But we must never, ever forget what happened here.

When I was 16, I walked into Backstreet Cafe for the first time. It was a sanctuary for me. I felt relieved. I felt giddy with excitement. I felt safe among my people. Seven speeding bullets have reminded me just how fragile safety is.

Kirk Read lives in Northern California. This article was submitted to The Voice by Kirk Read.



Ronald Gay

Spiritual Life: The Quest for Freedom

The Way In - Part 3

By Noel Springwood

Mark Twain put it this way, "They say that God created man in His own image. Well, man, not wanting to be outdone in generosity, returned the compliment."

His politically unacceptable language notwithstanding, he does have a point.

The Spiritual Life is often about images: images of self, of others, of the world around and of a sustaining or transcending power. A person has control over most of these. That control, however, is often challenged or usurped by social pressures, physical forces or any number of emotional influences.

To begin then with self-image. In many ways, it is dependent on how a person perceives what is often thought of as reality but what often is just a kind of illusion.

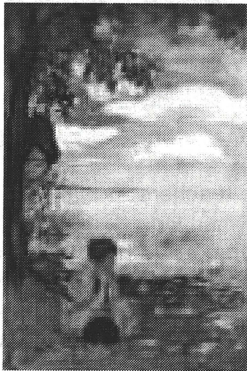
So, if a person considers his or her life to be intimately connected with a flow of natural forces, then that person will draw great spiritual strength from the world of nature and become attuned to its ebb and flow. If a person thinks that his or her life is connected to some kind of all-powerful being then that per-

son will draw strength from power. The more power: the more strength.

If a person has a poor self-image, owing to fear, anger, frustration or disappointment, then that person will find Spiritual Nourishment in those things that can ease those feelings. However, that person could also be strongly influenced by the things that cause them and give those things an unwarranted place of control over the process of living.

If a person can look at him or herself, though, as someone essentially good and loving, then that person will draw Spiritual Nourishment and Strength from a positive lifestyle and a loving attitude.

For the most part, human beings begin life with that latter perspective. In time, though, the other dimensions creep in and take over. Through indoctrination and/or conditioning, the natural childlike spontaneity, trust and love are replaced by inflexible rules and attitudes and insensitive words and actions. What should be an ongoing process of discovery becomes simply an exercise in functioning rightly or wrongly, with little regard for the complete person or the effect this might have on others.



To develop a Spiritual Dimension in life, it is necessary to get back to that childlike innocence. In fact, within each of us, that child still exists, waiting for the kind of nurturing and love that can allow the goodness and beauty there to grow and prosper. And that's the first step along the way: to recognise that child and give it the kind of attention it craves. Maybe it's just a matter of going back to childhood memories. It might be a case of going back to childhood dreams. Then again, it might mean going back to heal childhood hurts.

The practice of Meditation that has been talked about in this series so far can help in this process. That child and its needs will surface and reach out for a hug.

What can help greatly, in this whole experience, is the practice of Journaling. Keeping some kind of a record of how the quiet times are going and what kind of insights are being gained. It can also log the difficulties and frustrations.

The word "Journal" is a bit misleading here. It could actually be a poetic record, a record in sketches or pictures, a series of impressions or even some kind of musical expression. It could be a collection of all of these.

If in doubt about how to start, just buy a nice blank book with an attractive cover. Take complete ownership of it by giving it a title, putting your name on it and maybe a favourite photo. Begin logging by simply entering each day's date. If there's nothing that suggests itself for that day, leave a blank space

and begin again the next day.

There's no right or wrong way, except to begin and keep up the effort. In time, something will emerge and patterns will develop. There might be a lot of empty space at the start. If the task seems really difficult, begin by writing a letter to the child within. Pick a given time in the life of that child or a series of experiences about which the child may need some kind of encouragement or assurance. It could be forgiving the child or asking forgiveness of the child.

Maybe you need to write a letter to someone else: someone who hurt you, someone you have hurt or someone who has died. Letters generally are a great way to begin to find that inner self and inner peace that is the foundation of any true Spirituality.

Through it all, too, will come a more positive Self-image and from that, the road to a more wholesome understanding of life, love, happiness and the world around will become more and more apparent.

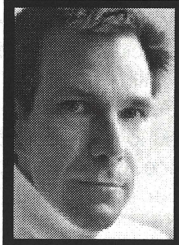
Ironically, if such were the case, humanity would have returned the compliment, that Mark Twain jokes about, in a more beautiful and beneficial way than he ever imagined.

NOEL SPRINGWOOD (a pen-name - "Out of respect for his former associates") served most of his life as a Roman Catholic Priest. He now lives in voluntary exile from that ministry in order to live and work openly within the LGBT community as a Gay Man. You can contact him through THE VOICE or email him at

A Voice exclusive.

Confessions of a Late Bloomer
Is It Over? (Part 2 of 2)

By Randy Siegel



I hung up the phone. I felt as if I had been pulled from class before the final exam. The relationship was over, yet I had so much more to learn.

He said there were no fireworks, and he was right. In truth, I had never given him my heart. I was still getting over someone else.

I realized I would miss dating more than I would miss dating him. I would also miss all that I was learning.

Relationships as mirrors provide one the strongest opportunities for growth, and I had grown a lot over our five months together.

I have heard it said that when the student is ready the teacher will come. He came at a time when I was open to whatever life brought.

He taught me about real power. His energy was grounded in "being" while mine was based upon "doing." While I operated from fear, he was grounded in love.

I had always believed that real power came from doing. Now, I was learning that in being we are our strongest. I was learning to surrender to life instead of trying to manipulate it to reach desired outcomes.

I also learned about love. He was the best hugger. When this man hugged you, love literally radiated off his body and warmed your soul.

With him, I felt loved unconditionally. By modeling him, I was learning how to have an open and generous heart.

Unlike past relationships, I accepted him for who he was and did not try to change him. I could respect our differences and celebrate our similarities. I cared less what others thought about him and our relationship.

We talked opening about spirituality. We meditated together. I became more aware of the whisperings of my soul, learning to respect my imagination, meditations and dreams.

We traveled beautifully together. Not since my ex-wife had I found a better traveling companion. Our two overseas trips had left me a more confident traveler.

As wonderful as all these lessons were, they were not enough to sustain the relationship. He was right. There wasn't fire — not even a spark.

In truth, I began this relationship before ending my last. I had met this man only weeks after ending an 18-month relationship, the longest since my divorce five years ago.

Throughout the five months of our relationship, the ghost of this past relationship followed me like a shadow that was impossible to shake.

I had hoped that in time my heart would thaw, but time had run out.

I pledge this time I would stop and grieve the end of our relationship.

I would allow myself to feel my loss.

Not only was I going to miss all I was learning, I was going to miss his companionship. Living in a new city, I had few close friends and feared becoming isolated.

I also feared being alone for the rest of my life. Over the past five years, I had dated a lot, but no one had stuck around. My relationships had no staying power. I had to quit blaming my partners and look at myself. I had to ask, "What was I doing wrong?"

"Was I not enough?" "Had I been too much?" The tapes rolled in my head.

I also had to remind myself I had been divorced only five years. Over those five years, I had undergone constant change, including leaving a fourteen-year marriage, coming out, changing careers and moving. I was a moving target.

I craved stability. Now comfortable in my skin, I wanted to simply enjoy being me. I wanted to apply the lessons I had learned.

I was ready to break old patterns.

Instead of jumping back into a manic manhunt frantically searching the Internet, bars and friends' rolodexes to find a replacement, I wanted to embrace being alone.

When and if a new relationship did come, I would be ready. This time, I would be emotionally available.

It has been said that each relationship takes up where the last one ended. As this one ended, I knew I was in a better place.

Randy Siegel is an Asheville, NC-based writer and speaker who specializes in the challenges of coming out later in life. He can be reached through [The Voice](#) or at [redacted]. This article was submitted to [The Voice](#) by Randy Siegel.

"It is in the power of the soul to maintain its own serenity and tranquility, and not to think that pain is an evil" --Marcus Aurelius
"My whole life is waiting for the questions to which I have prepared answers."
-- Tom Stoppard
"It's hard to fight an enemy who has outposts in your head" --Sally Kempton

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By Scott N. Schau

I am the current chairperson of the Regional Pride Committee. I thank A.J. Mahari, as the editor of the Voice, for all her work in the community and for putting together this fine publication every month.

As stated in the Voice last month, this column is going to be a forum for the RPC to communicate to the community about its activities and events.

Sunday, November 5, at 12:00 noon potluck lunch, followed by Annual General Meeting (AGM) at 12:30 Conference Room in the Library, Davis Centre, University of Waterloo. We will be discussing the constitution, taking nominations for the open positions, and having elections.

We need volunteers, thus, I am inviting you to come out and volunteer. For more information on the RPC please email me at: [redacted] or Jim Parrott at: [redacted]

This month I am going to tell you a bit about the committee and its history and mission. The mission:

"The Regional Pride Committee exists to foster the promotion and development of a supporting and affirming queer community in the Waterloo-Wellington region. The Committee will accomplish this by facilitating both the planning and promotion of new and existing activities"

The Regional Pride Committee sponsors the Annual Regional Pride Celebration for the LGBT communities in the Waterloo-Wellington Regions. Plans are underway for the 7th Annual Regional Pride Celebration, that will take place on Saturday June 23, 2001, on Roos Island in Victoria Park, Kitchener. This will be our third time on Roos Island and our 4th event in Victoria Park.

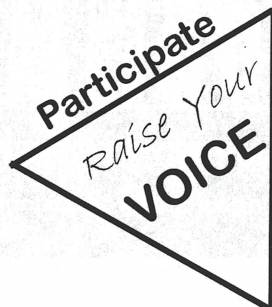
The RPC also maintains the Rainbow Community Centre website:

<http://www.rainbow.on.ca/>

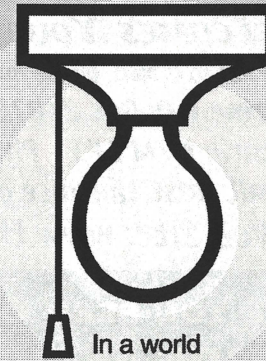
This site is intended to serve the local-area LGBT communities in much the same way that a community center housed in an actual building might. There is space for local-area services and recreational organizations and also LGBT-friendly professionals and businesses. Our site also presents a list of events that are of special interests to LGBT communities. Please visit our community centre to find out more.

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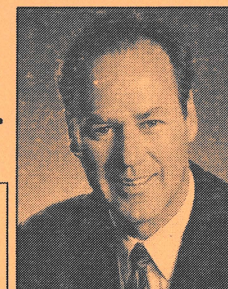
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