

G AUSTIN Y

gcs

477-6699

Gay Community Services

GAY AUSTIN WAS BROUGHT
TO YOU THIS TIME BY:
BILL, ELLEN, SCOTT,
WAYDE, AMME, and friends

Number 2

aug 1976

"The newsletter of Gay Community Services of Austin, Texas for its gay community"

BIRTHDAY

Gay Community Services will celebrate its first anniversary of operation in a few weeks. Even after a year of activity many lesbians and gay men are unaware of our presence, and those who do know we exist often have no idea of what we do or what our purposes are. Misconceptions abound.

As stated in our constitution, our ultimate goal is to improve the condition of gay people in society and to aid in their development. To achieve this end, we have set out to provide peer counseling for those who need to talk to someone who understands and shares their feelings; to make referrals to qualified medical, psychological and legal professionals with whom gays can comfortably share their problems; to spread information about homosexuality and gay life, particularly to the non-gay community which is ignorant of our presence; and to serve as a social

continued, p. 2

GAY AND GRAY AND HAPPY

I had been wanting to interview and older gay couple for several weeks but had no luck in finding even one. It seems the older gay community and the younger are fairly separated in this town, as older and younger people everywhere seem to be. A friend finally told me about a gay couple who were in Austin for a few days. They were just what I was looking for, both in their sixties. They have been together forty-three years--and are not a rarity.

I was strongly impressed by the normality, stability, and conservatism of their relationship. I felt they had known each other's strengths and weaknesses for a long time, as well as their own. They had accepted each other long ago. Thoughts and feelings were spoken openly and even a

little

little bluntly.. Polite tactfulness was not needed between them. It was like a visit to my grandparents. (They even offered me some peach ice cream)

They grew up in the same city during the Depression. There certainly was no excess of cash. They both helped their families financially before moving in together. Almost all their entertaining was done at home. Even though they never "came out" to their parents, the parties in their homes were attended by the couple's gay friends--and of course their parents were also there. On the weekends there was the beach, and "one dollar cocktail parties" where one dollar would buy all the bath tub gin martinis anyone wanted.

The men were separated during the war for two years with no serious changes in the relationship. After the war they moved to a pleasant part of the country where they have lived and worked for twenty years. They are retired now. They keep small businesses and are occupied with their home and other gay couples. I asked them how old their friends were. They said one couple was fifteen and another twenty-five. I was surprised they were generally younger. They said that they were not talking about how old their friends were, but about how long they had been together.

They are both active in the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) and are impressed with the commitment of the congregations in the several states they have visited. When they travel, they always stop by the local MCC. "It's great. We always feel at home with our brothers and sisters, you know."

About the times: they think now is a great time to be young and gay, but many people are still afraid to come out. They think relationships are

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LIBRARY

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1901

organization in which gay people can meet and talk and establish friendships beyond those offered by gay bars.

Our primary ~~XXXXXX~~ program to provide these has been to maintain a telephone hotline and open office six nights a week from 4-10 PM. During these hours, Monday through Saturday, a volunteer is in the office at 2330 Guadalupe (the University Y) to provide help and information to anyone who walks in or calls. Inquiries are frequently for the location of gay bars, hours for the VD clinic, recommendations for doctors or psychologists, and activities.

GCS received about 200 telephone calls in July. The lending library has about 100 books and publications. Books may be checked out for two weeks, if the borrower's name, address, and telephone number is on file in the GCS library card file.

The volunteer staff is often called for peer counseling by someone who is coming out and needs some help in understanding new feelings or in interpreting the behavior of other gay people they have met (e.g. the "first love" who after one night seems ~~XXX~~ to lose interest). Also, for gays who are temporarily depressed or are having trouble with a lover or friend, we provide a place to get away to for awhile--with someone to talk to.

As an extension of the peer counseling service, we also offer consciousness raising rap groups. The group situation provides an opportunity for more feedback on an issue and a broader spectrum of ideas. Participants also have a chance to get to know a group of people through the discussion format. A topic is usually chosen for each week for a focal point of discussion although the floor is open to any pressing problem that someone wishes to consider. Attendance is open ~~XXX~~ to every one.

are too transitory these days. "Too much hit and run. People don't even give each other the time to prove themselves." They recommend married life but don't know if they could make it in today's environment. People are more economically free to do as they choose. They are free to move away from their parents at an earlier age; to have their own apartments and transportation and have money for entertainment. In the past, the lack of money forced people to spend time together.

We closed the conversation by talking about Austin and their home. They have enjoyed Austin and the people they have met. They have been to the lake and loved the sights. At their home, they have thirty banana trees. It keeps them in bananas the whole year. They asked me if I had a lover. I said no. And they ~~XXXX~~ said, "Well, we hope you get of beautiful number soon," just like my own hetero-grandfather would ask if I had had any hot dates lately.

GAY COMMUNITY SERVICES
OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE COORDINATORS

- General Coordinator: Ellen Rayfield
476-0316
Office Coordinator: Art Morris
Speakers Committee: Woody Egger
Treasurer: Carmen ~~XXXX~~
Secretary: Scott Lind
Librarian: Caryn ~~XXXX~~
Entertainment Committee: Mayde Frey
454-2029
Men's Rap Group: Marc Schmitz 451-5041
Schmitz

HOUSEMATE WANTED: Nonsmoker. \$110/mo.
Bills paid. Michael, 477-1241, after 5.

THE WOMAN BEHIND FRIENDS AND LOVERS

Marcilea Fletcher plans to open a mixed bar or "two-way cabaret" called Friends and ~~XXXX~~ Lovers in the near future. Located at 222 E 6th street at the former location of Studio IV movie theater, Friends and Lovers is gradually taking shape as carpenters transform the facility into a nightclub.

Ms Fletcher is an energetic woman who has a passion for bringing straights and gays together. She does not want the bar to become "just another straight bar." Ms. Fletcher envisions a multi-purpose place which will display art works on consignment, feature talent auditions and live soap-opera-type ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ stage presentations, offer gymnastics classes, house a haircut company and set up a community setting in which gays and straights can encounter each other in a relaxed environment.

Ms Fletcher, an avowed heterosexual and mother of three children, has a graduate degree in R psychology. She is enthusiastic about offering gay people in Austin an attractive place to go. Friends and Lovers promises to be just that.

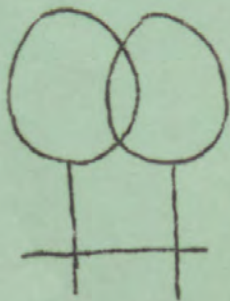
THE PERVERTS IN OUR MIDST

We all have our own little quirks. Some are into bondage, some straight, some into the unprintable. But the most perverted, unusual thing to do is to be an activist. Not just an activist, but a gay activist. Realizing that everyone is into their own thing, we do not necessarily condemn these actions, but feel it is right to warn all gays of the possibility of this happening to them.

The first thing that needs to be realized is how to distinguish a gay activist from your normal everyday queer. X The first bit of paraphernalia that gives them away is the ever-present notebook. These are not students but gay activists. Who wver heard of a real student carrying a notebook? When you see the notebook, avoid them. They are looking for people --volunteers--to the cause. The next give-away is that ~~XX~~ they talk in letters if you stick around long enough to talk to them: "GCS is helping sponsor the TGTF Con. along with ALLO...maybe." If you know the letters, and the sentence makes sense, be careful, you are getting into the trap. You will also notice that they have trouble holding any~~X~~ sort of normal conversation. It is always (continued p. 4)

PARTY

ALO



DANCE \$2.00
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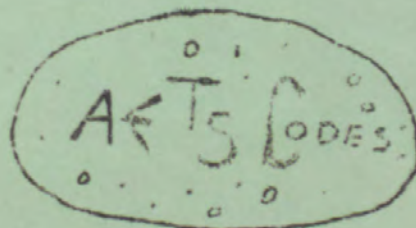
All the beer you can drink

2330 Guadalupe
University Y

Aug 14 8:00 PM

July Goes Slow At GCS

July was a lazy month at GCS, insofar as activities were concerned. Perhaps people just wanted to take it easy after a rousing Gay Pride Week celebration in June. The newsletter was not published during July. A few people picked up trash during a GCS-sponsored clean-up day at Hippie Hollow on Sunday, July 25. The Gay Cabaret set for Saturday, July 31, was canceled due to lack of interest. Plans for a V.D. Day in August are incomplete.



PERVERTS (continued)

politics, politics, politics. Say three words and they will tell you where you are plotically incorrect, how you are a sexist, and how to brush your teeth. You say you've already run into this sort of person? and they seem a little misguided but will grow out of it? Poor misguided person yourself. You will become involved in the private life of a GA.

Outside ~~XXX~~ or inside the GA is a person. Yes, this statement is true. They have sex drives, bills and a private life. Not very private, because there isn't a lot of time. If you become involved with this person expect stragge things. This person will have a very low sex drive. It's not that they don't enjoy sex, it's just that they are too exhausted to move when they get into bed. I heard of two GAs who tried to form a relationship, add it took them three months to find a night free so they could get together. Needless to say the relationship was brief. Also, GAs are tied to the phone. At any time they may suddenly jump out of bed to answer the phone, which is alright--but do you want anyone jumping out of bed when it's so hard to get them there?

If ~~XXX~~ interrupted private time doesn't bother you, you may qualify for involvement. If you are of the closet type then beware of the GA, who will ask you to park illegally and fill your car with Gay Pride Week posters, knowing all the time there are cops ready and willing to harass you. Then there are the bills. GAs tend to have very little money because few jobs will fit into their free time. This isn't to say that they won't pay the bills. It's just that they will ~~XX~~ think a night out on the town is going to McDonald's and buying a sixpack of Shiner.

But it isn't that bad. There is the knowledge that someone is working for Gay Rights in Austin and that you are offering moral support. And if you go quietly insane while giving this support ...don't say we didn't warn you.

GCS IS ONE YEAR OLD
Birthday party Aug. 28.

1976 GAY PRIDE WEEK IN AUSTIN

Two hundred marchers participated in the 1976 Gay Pride Parade up Congress Avenue to the Texas Capitol on June 26. Two decorated pickup trucks serves as attractive floats. One float carried Reverend Ms. Rob Shivers of Metropolitan Community Church of Austin. The other float featured a large pink Lambda atop it. Two colorfully costumed marchers added a circuslike touch to the parade.

A contingent of separatist lesbians met the parade at the entrance to the Capitol grounds, emphasizing lesbians' place in society outside the gay movement.

Television stations KTBC and KTVV filmed the marchers during the parade and during the rally at the Capitol. About 150 gays massed on the Capitol steps chanting and singing, calling for gay rights now.

Res 477-0019 CENTER STAGE
THEATRE
NORMAN IS THAT YOU?
A Hilarious Comedy

What does a father do when he finds out his son is homosexual? Now in its 5th year in San Francisco.

Friends AND Lovers
FRIENDS AND LOVERS IS NOT A MYTH. TAKES TIME TO CREATE A LEGEND!

Friends and Lovers is a multi-tiered nightclub with full stage facilities, gallery, Hair Cut Company, main level bar, Za Zu Pit, Sobra Room, piano bar, Discotheque, and Backgammon. See it soon!

T-shirts on sale for \$4 at our box office, 222 E. 6th. Identification cards for \$1 (good for discounts, 50¢ admission)

Auditions for soap operas and other entertainment will begin July 30th.

For Details Call 478-5661

The first of these is the fact that the British people are not only a free people but a free people in the sense that they are free to choose their own form of government and their own laws. This is a fundamental principle of democracy and it is one which we should all cherish and defend.

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