

HGLPC News

April 1997

Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus

www.hglpc.org

"Best HGLPC meeting...perhaps ever"

BY CICELY WYNNE

"The best HGLPC meeting in 15 years — perhaps ever," commented one long-time caucus member after the March 5 meeting. "We're going to have the best year in our history."

Her sentiment was echoed by others still excited by the rollercoaster meeting, which saw major announcements and plans around every curve.

A unified spirit rare even for the best political organizations seemed to say: "This is the year."

Meeting highlights included:

- Annise Parker announced that her City Council campaign has already gotten off to a fast start.

- Former City Controller George Greanias showed up early to say he's thinking seriously about running for mayor and remind the caucus of its "major role" in the crowded mayor's race.

This week, Greanias endorsed Parker in her bid for the at-large City Council seat being vacated by Gracie Saenz in November. He also hinted that he might even run against Lanier if the Legislature grants Lanier another term. (Story, page 3)

- The annual dinner is going after a big speaker and corporate sponsors to turn a \$30,000 profit. (Story, page 6)

- Caucus annual dinner profits can fund HEET,



Annise Parker
City Council
candidate

crimination ordinance. (HEET story, page 2)

- Adoption of President Lane Lewis' \$96,000 revenue plan. (Story, page 7)

Annise Parker

Parker, who has already begun collecting campaign contributions, said this week that she is moving toward raising \$100,000 by summer and is lining up major individual endorsements early so that she begins June as the formidable frontrunner.

HGLPC has not yet endorsed in any race.

(See Greanias vs. Lanier?, Page 3)

a major new effort to dramatically increase local corporate non-discrimination policies and help ensure a citywide non-discrimination ordinance by 2000. (Story, page 2)

- A three-year campaign to expand the 30,000 mailing list to 100,000 friendly voters to support issues and withstand any efforts to repeal a non-dis-

Banner

Days Ahead

Mon. March 31

Annual Dinner

Meeting - 6:30 p.m.

HGLPC Office, 3400 Montrose #203. (Story, page 6)

Mon. March 31

HEET Meeting 7:30 p.m.

HGLPC Office. (Story, page 2)

Wed. April 2

HGLPC meeting, first Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
Lovett Inn, 501 Lovett.
Refreshments, 7 p.m.

**March and April
Membership Sale**

\$20 for new and former members
(Page 5)

Sunday, April 13

Power Brunch with Rob Mosbacher Jr.

12:30-3 p.m. Moose Cafe,
\$25 advance tickets;
\$50 sponsors. 521-1000.

Mon. April 28

Newsletter Mailout-

6:30 p.m. HGLPC office

Sun. May 11

**Alley gay play benefit
for HGLPC and LGRL**
(Story and order form,
page 3)

Rob Mosbacher Jr. to speak at April 13 Power Brunch

Rob Mosbacher Jr. will be the guest speaker at the Sunday, April 13 HGLPC Power Brunch.

The Power Brunch, which has featured five mayoral hopefuls, is scheduled for 12:30-3 p.m. Sunday, April 13 at the Moose Cafe, West Gray at Waugh.

Advance tickets are \$25. Advance tickets are recommended since seating is limited. Tickets, priced at \$30, will be sold at the door if any are available. Advance tickets may be ordered by calling the caucus office, 521-1000.

Although political party is not listed on the ballot for City Council and mayoral races,

Mosbacher's Republican credentials are well-known. Mosbacher may be the highest-ranking (albeit unofficial) Republican candidate ever to address an HGLPC gathering. Few local Republicans address the caucus; fewer actually screen or seek endorsement because of the party stance on homosexuality and the active right wing of the county Republican party.

Power Brunch speakers have included mayoral hopefuls Lee Brown, John Whitmire, Sylvester Turner, and George Greanias.

Mosbacher is the son of prominent Republican Party leader Robert Mosbacher.

HEET designed as community-wide effort to expand corporate non-discrimination policies, pass ordinance

Some Houston companies may not have non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation "simply" because they haven't been asked.

"They don't know they have a problem," commented Harold Shultz.

Shultz helped start the Corporate Network Group (CNG) and leads the

Texas Commerce Bank Pride Team, the gay/lesbian employee group. He has just agreed to chair the corporate section of HGLPC's HEET (Houston Employment Equality Taskforce), designed to increase the number of local companies with sexual orientation in their employment policies. Terri Richardson chairs the voter ID section, designed to expand HGLPC's 30,000+ mailing list.

Both parts add up to a big three-year goal: By the year 2000, Houston will have a non-discrimination employment ordinance covering every gay man and lesbian in the city. Times have changed since the 1985 referendum, and so has strategy.

The Corporate Plan

The corporate plan begins with 50 volunteers from a cross section of gay and lesbian organizations making 10 short phone calls a week to Houston businesses. In three months, the calls will be completed, and the follow-up visits begin.

Since CNG began last fall, Shultz has had several pleasant visits with corporate management. "At this level, they are usually open. They want to know how to implement policies."

Shultz tries to act as a liaison between management and the gay/lesbian employee group, if one exists, so the group can be advised about management attitudes. He then gives the employee group the information, a presentation packet, and surveys.

HEET Meeting 7:30 p.m. Monday, March 31, HGLPC Office, 3400 Montrose, #203.

"Working out a non-discrimination policy is easier if the employee group takes it from there," Shultz explained.

Shultz is working with management and employee groups in several large national companies with Houston offices to implement non-discrimination policies. Company names are best kept quiet for now, Shultz said, lest the local right wing wake up too early.

HEET hopes to ID 100,000 supporters

Much of the dinner's anticipated \$30,000 profit is designed to fund both the corporate and voter ID sections of HEET.

Terri Richardson, coordinator of HEET's voter ID section, points to a Houston precinct map dotted with pink and purple marks. "These are the dozens of precincts where we have significant voting strength." The map was decorated last year when caucus volunteers color-coded the number of same sex households identified on the 30,000 mailing list. The caucus 10,000 mailing list was expanded to about 30,000 when the county voter registration list was purchased and sorted this way:

Two-person same-sex households, different last names, less than 18 years apart, between the ages of 25-62, not living near a college. Richardson said she understands the sophisticated county list is the only one of its kind in the country.

"We need to phone bank this list and

(See Imagine, Page 3)

Calling all volunteers

Volunteers are needed to make 10 short phone calls a week. Seven people are also needed to coordinate calls and visits in corporate categories, such as restaurants, Montrose, outside Montrose, gay & lesbian, and others.

"I hope all our community organizations can unite in this effort and send at least two volunteers. This is a community project that benefits everyone," Harold Shultz explained. The project is coordinated by HEET and funded by HGLPC, but volunteers do not have to be HGLPC members to participate.

Step 1- The Phone Call

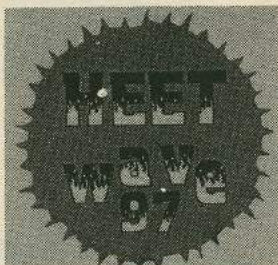
"Hello, I'm Oscar Stein. I'm part of a project to identify companies with sexual orientation or domestic partner benefits in their employment policies. Do you have a few minutes?"

Step 2 - The Response

"Most company representatives are courteous and professional," Shultz said.

Step 3 - If the response is yes, note it, and someone will follow up and get a copy.

If the answer is no, or a variation, the phone script will show you what to say. Then, HEET will set up a meeting with management.



Greanias VS. Lanier?!?

(from Page 1)

Greanias told the HGLPC audience he is thinking about running "very seriously. If I do, I will seek your support."

"The audience at the October HGLPC Power Brunch was left with the mistaken impression that I am not running," Greanias said this week.

In fact, he said he is "very close" to deciding — and his decision will not depend on what the Texas Legislature does about Houston City Council term limits or residency requirements.

Good seats remain for Alley's gay play benefit performance for caucus, LGRL

The Houston arts scene continues its love affair with gay operas and plays as the Alley Theatre prepares the local premiere of Terrence McNally's Broadway hit, *Love! Valour! Compassion!*

The Alley Arena Stage's May 11 performance will benefit HGLPC and LGRL (Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas).

Individual tickets for the 7:30 p.m. Sunday, May 11 show are \$25. Event sponsors are \$50. The show is presented on the smaller, theater-in-the round Alley Arena stage.

The production follows the story of nine gay men who gather at a New York country home over three summer holiday weekends.

McNally is the acclaimed author of *Lips Together, Teeth Apart* and Tony Award-winner *Master Class*.

To reserve tickets by phone with a credit card, please call the caucus office at 521-1000 (and a board member will return your call) or return the order form below. Tickets may also be purchased at caucus meetings or through board members.

Only 95 seats will be sold (about half the house in the small, intimate theater).

The Alley warns: "This production contains nudity, profanity and sexual situations. It is not intended for those audiences who might be easily offended."

Imagine a 100,000+ list

(From Page 2)

to verify that they support us and our issues, such as gay candidates and a non-discrimination ordinance. We also need to block walk friendly neighborhoods, survey them, register them, and get new names."

By 2000, HEET hopes to have 100,000 gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people identified.

For starters, a 100,000+ list could:

- Encourage City Council to pass a citywide non-discrimination ordinance (especially after Council receives an expanded list of local corporate non-discrimination policies).

- Only if absolutely necessary, withstand any referendum effort to repeal the ordinance.

- Elect more gay/lesbian candidates.



Alley Ticket Order Form and HGLPC Membership

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Phone _____ Fax _____ e-mail _____

MEMBERSHIP

- ☐ \$30 Regular annual dues
☐ \$20 New or Former*
(See Membership Sale, p. 5)
☐ \$50 2-year membership
or Family

MAY 11 ALLEY TICKETS

- _____ Tickets at \$25 each
_____ Sponsorships at \$50 each

PAYMENT: ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA

Credit Card No. _____ Expiration Date _____

Mail to: HGLPC, P.O. Box 66664, Houston, TX 77266 or Call 521-1000.

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For advertising rates,
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Cicely Wynne,
newsletter editor

March^{*} Madness Membership Sale

* April, too!

\$20

Calling all Former and New HGLPC Members

We Want You to Join Us

for

The Most Exciting Year in HGLPC History

- ★ Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus
is set for a pivotal role in fierce mayor's race
- ★ Annise Parker announces for City Council
- ★ The biggest annual dinner — \$30,000 profit goal
- ★ The HEET's on corporate non-discrimination policies
- ★ Project ID to expand the unique 30,000+ mailing list
- ★ Rob Mosbacher Jr. Power Brunch April 13

Discount applies to new members who join in March or April and former HGLPC members whose membership expired anytime before Dec. 31, 1996. Regular dues are \$30.

To join HGLPC, mail to: HGLPC, P.O. Box 66664, Houston, TX 77266 — — — — —

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ e-mail _____

Payment: Check ☐ Credit Card MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐

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Committee's early start sets the table for groundbreaking annual dinner

**BY ANNISE PARKER
and JIM OWENS
Dinner Co-Chairs**

Plans for the record-setting HGLPC annual dinner have gotten off to an early start this year.

The dinner will be our largest and most successful ever, with a fund-raising goal of a \$30,000 profit for the caucus.

For the first time, we are seeking corporate sponsorships, taking advantage of the growing number of corporations who want to reach our community. We will offer them a slick professional brochure for their ads and begin distributing it during Pride Week.

These funds, ticket sales, and proceeds from the large silent auction will help underwrite the Houston Employment Equality Taskforce (HEET).

We need many people to help make this an historic event in Houston's gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered community. Dinner speakers have included gay Congressman Barney Frank, Mathilda Krimm, Roberta Achtenberg, and former *New Republic* editor Andrew Sullivan.

To volunteer, call Jim at 523-6109 or attend the 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 31 meeting at the caucus office, 3400 Montrose, #203. HEET meets at 7:30 p.m.

Dinner Wish List

Keynoters: We have begun contacting possible speakers, but we need ideas — and people who have personal relationships with potential invitees.

Silent Auction: We need a select group of volunteers for the silent auction team — men and women who are creative.

Program: We need an experienced design and layout person. We envision a slick advertising brochure that will combine the work of HEET and the dinner committee in identifying and reaching supportive corporate advertisers.

Frank, Krim highlight 14-year old dinner tradition

HGLPC is, as far as we know, the South's oldest gay and lesbian political organization. Sometimes the caucus has tried to be all things to all people — the all-purpose activist group. At other times it has wandered into internal bickering. It has struggled, membership has waxed and waned, but it has held on for more than 20 years. It is also Houston's only non-partisan (although, more correctly, it should be called bi-partisan) gay/lesbian political organization, a rarity in this country's big cities where competing political groups spring up like mushrooms.

The world was a different place when HGLPC was founded in 1975. In the early years, simply finding a safe place to meet was difficult, and public spokespersons, even harder. But the caucus grew, thrived and endured by focusing on fundamentals.

Gay men and lesbians didn't do



public formal dinners in Houston back when we started the dinners. The Pride Awards and the

Black Tie Dinner were well in the future. The then-named Gay Political Caucus, under Larry Bagneris, hosted a dinner at the Swim Club, a gay private club, in December 1983. National Gay Task Force (later NGLTF) Executive Director Ginny Apuzzo was guest speaker. Attire was informal, and there was no real outreach beyond the membership. But it planted a seed. In 1984, with Sue Lovell as president, GPC again brought Apuzzo in to highlight a joint fund-raising reception and dinner for the two organizations. We went mainstream by holding it at the Four Seasons Hotel downtown (now the Doubletree).

We skipped 1985. The first of our consecutive formal anniversary dinners took place in 1986 when I was president. The bruising city employment referendum was only recently behind us. We needed to raise money, we needed to raise spirits, we needed to acknowledge our own, and we needed the non-gay community with us.

We mailed invitations to every mailing list that Gene Harrington could beg, borrow or steal. We invited our straight supporters and officeholders to don their formalwear and celebrate with us. The dinner organizing committee, anchored by arch Democrat David Fowler and Republican Committee chair Joe Thornton, flew in openly gay Boston City Council Member David Scondras as keynote speaker. The VIP cocktail party was held in the elegant high-rise condo of the late

(See Corporate, Page 7)

Take a look at HGLPC now

At the last general meeting, caucus members voted to adopt a 1997 revenue plan as a goal. This comprehensive revenue plan will achieve a membership base of about 1,400 members and bring in \$96,370 in revenues by December 31, 1997.

This will be accomplished through these projects:

Victory Club
People who contribute \$1,200 or more to HGLPC.

The main purpose of the Victory Club is to raise funds to help pay an executive director.

To illustrate our appreciation for these individuals or businesses, HGLPC will:

- Give a quarter-page ad in all newsletters to contributors who request it;
- List those contributors who request it as Victory Club members in all our newsletters and as sponsors of all HGLPC events;
- Give a one-year membership to

HOUSTON
GAY
&
LESBIAN
POLITICAL
CAUCUS
YEAR 1

President's Message

by **LANE LEWIS**
HGLPC President



dinner;

Twenty Freedom Club members raise \$12,000.

House Parties

As president, I hosted the first house party March 27, just as this newsletter was coming out. Two

members will use the mailing list and host two parties each month.

This is designed to generate 540 new members in a year and raise \$16,800.

Mail Solicitation for new members is designed to raise \$3,140.

Special Events

HGLPC will help organize five functions this year in conjunction with other organizations.

Profit from the dinner alone is projected at \$30,000.

Pride Week

Our goal is to sign up 100 new members — \$3,000.

The monthly newsletter will raise at least \$330 in new memberships.

WOW! Is this a great year or what!? As you can see in the newsletters, the caucus has been very active. Excitement is high, and victory is imminent. Join us.

HGLPC;

- Give two honorary tickets for the annual dinner;
- Give two honorary tickets to all Power Brunches;
- Invite them to a private event with all HGLPC-endorsed political candidates.

Twenty Victory Club members would yield \$24,000.

Freedom Club

People who contribute \$600 or more to HGLPC.

This club will raise funds for Get Out the Vote (GOTV) efforts.

Members receive:

- Listing as a Freedom Club members in all our newsletters;
- Listing as a sponsor of all HGLPC events;
- One-year HGLPC membership;
- Two honorary tickets to the annual

Corporate ads will help hold down annual dinner price

(From Page 6)

David Bryant. The dinner was at the Four Seasons. Marshall Maxwell provided dinner music. We presented recognition plaques, including one to Cicely Wynne (our illustrious newsletter editor, now returned from burnout) who was honored for lifetime commitment to the movement. And we decided we would do this every year.

Jim Owens, now a Montrose precinct judge, was caucus board chair during my second term as president in 1987. That year we hosted gay Congressman Barney Frank in one of his

first community appearances after coming out. Later dinner keynoters ranged from Mathilda Krim to Roberta Achtenberg to former *New Republic* editor Andrew Sullivan.

We have always been cognizant of the need to balance fund-raising with the desire to make the event affordable to as many people as possible. Though tickets prices have gradually crept up, they remain less than comparable events, and we will continue a policy of providing underwriting for those who cannot afford to attend. The ability to continue this policy will rely heavily on corporate sponsors, never before really tapped by HGLPC. — *Annise Parker.*

HGLPC

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