

HGLPCNews

HOUSTON GAY & LESBIAN POLITICAL CAUCUS

A letter to HGLPC

by
*Annise
Parker*



City Council candidate
Annise Parker

Thanks to all of you who supported me in my city council race. Your money and your volunteer hours made the race possible. Your encouragement and help gave me the strength to persevere. I appreciate the faith you have shown in me.

There were many positive aspects to this race. I ran an effective, professional, issue-oriented campaign. I was considered a serious contender in the eyes of political pundits and the media from the beginning. I was able to raise issues that would not otherwise have been addressed, but also to convey the range of issues I consider vital to this city.

Coming in third of 19 candidates, with 11% of the vote, is a very strong showing. I won all the Montrose precincts by a large margin, led in the Heights and the Washington Avenue area, and got votes all over the city. There was a 7% city-wide voter turnout. Montrose voted in a higher percentage than the rest of the city, but there just weren't enough total votes coming from the areas where I ran strongest.

My five thousand votes included a lot of non-gay support, so we know that many gay voters stayed home. Possible solutions are already being implemented. My campaign was a test run for HGLPC's new computer technology. Data sorts from voter registration rolls enabled me to mail to gay and lesbian voters who had never been on any community lists. Precincts where I ran strongest are being assigned precinct captains for door-to-door efforts. We are analyzing the effectiveness of our phone banking.

The local gay/lesbian media was particularly supportive. I am pleased by the depth of coverage of the race, and personally honored by the coverage afforded me as a candidate. The mainstream media coverage was wholly inadequate! If you read the *Post*, you might not have known there was an election. They didn't even bother to screen or endorse a candidate. The positive aspect for me is that local non-gay media finally refers to me as a "neighborhood activist" or a "civic activist" I have never been a single issue candidate, and that is finally being reflected in the coverage.

I think it is important to state that I received only a half-dozen negative phone calls over the course of the campaign — none because I am gay! I was open about who I am and what I believe, both as an individual and as a candidate, and was treated respectfully everywhere I campaigned.

What's New?

Welcome to the new,
expanded HGLPC News!

Two new features can be
found within these pages.

First, each month a different community organization will be featured in an in-depth article. This will allow HGLPC members to learn more about other activities going on in Houston. We will be providing copies of HGLPC News to the featured organization so its members can learn more about us.

Second, we are selling advertising space to lesbian, gay, and other friendly businesses. This will help cover postage — yes, bulk rates went up too!

Of course, a bigger newsletter means more work! We need volunteers to sell ads, write articles, brainstorm fresh layout ideas, and help with the dreaded bulk mail sort. Sign up at the March 1 meeting.

Last, but far from least, we would like to extend the most sincere gratitude to **Norm Thompson** who has generously donated all printing for HGLPC News.

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Status

A Message from the President

HOUSTON GAY & LESBIAN POLITICAL CAUCUS

Terri Richardson, *President*
Keith Stewart, *Vice President*
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HGLPC News
Matthew Huston, *editor*

HGLPC News is a monthly publication of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, which is solely responsible for its contents. HGLPC meets the first Wednesday of every month at its offices, 2700 Albany Street, Suite 304, at 7:30 PM.

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Political Caucus
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Hooray for our Sister City. Three cheers for Dallas. Way to go, "Big D." Last month, Dallas — a more politically conservative city than our own Houston — banned employment discrimination based on sexual orientation.

by
Terri
Richardson

But wait, you say. Where was the news coverage about the demonstrations in the streets of Dallas that led up to this great victory? Where were the front page photos of gloved, helmeted Dallas Police Department officers dragging lesbian and gay protesters away from City Hall? Why didn't we hear about the hundreds who marched to City Council Chambers demanding their civil rights, and where was TWT's and The Triangle's coverage about the eloquent speeches that Dallas gay and lesbian leaders made at the protest rally?

We're an informed, sophisticated group. What gives? Where was the media?

There was no media, of course, because none of the aforementioned acts occurred. There were no marches, no demonstrations, no protests. In the State that gave us Warren Chisum, Phil Gramm, and Dick Armeý, the ruling body of Texas's second-largest City simply voted and announced that it will not tolerate discrimination based on a person's sexual orientation. Period.

The time has come for the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus to get serious about its purpose and methods for achieving its goals. We know why Dallas's City Council outlawed discrimination, and that is because three of Dallas's City Councilmembers are gay. Their days are spent listening to citizens complain about potholes and garbage pick-up, and they set aside hours and hours to pore over budgets and scrutinize bids, and read every report from every obscure city agency, and ask and answer every inane question put to them, and then say, "Oh, by the way, it's wrong to discriminate against lesbians and gay men."

Understand this: Only when an openly gay man or lesbian is sitting at the table at 801 Bagby, facing the Municipal Channel camera with the hearing impaired interpreter in the little circle, will the issue of discrimination against gays and lesbians again be raised. Our friends will not do it, as well-meaning as they may be. Only we can do it for ourselves.

If you have dropped out of the fight because you "did your time" and now you're working on your back yard landscaping, you are selling yourself short, because younger activists need to learn from you. If you make six figures a year and cannot imagine how a meter reader's opportunities for employment advancement with the City of Houston have anything to do with you, think again; the weakest among us will usually be targeted first, but they will not be targeted last. If you believe we don't have a chance to elect a lesbian or gay man to City Council in Houston, you are defeatist and frustrating and disappointing.

And if you think I have no right to talk to you this way, you're probably right; I probably don't. I am not, however, going to stand around from now until November and wonder why Dallas has three gay city councilmembers and Houston has none, and why queers in Dallas celebrate the passage of a non-discrimination ordinance and we in Houston bemoan the fact that we don't have and can't get one. Rather, I intend aggressively to encourage my friends to

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P-FLAG

This Month's Feature

The roots of P-FLAG — Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays — go back to 1972 when a mom and dad happened to turn on their TV and see their beloved son Morty being brutally beaten, while New York City police officers looked on with indifference. Jeanne and Jules Manford had long known and accepted that their son was gay. But suddenly, they wanted to do more than just be accepting.

Jeanne wrote an angry letter to the *New York Post* expressing her outrage, which inspired other parents of gays and lesbians to respond. Soon afterward, at the 1972 New York Pride Day parade, Jeanne marched at Morty's side carrying a sign that said, "Parents of Gays, Unite in Support of Our Children."

The crowd went wild. Initially, Jeanne thought they were cheering for Dr. Benjamin Spock who was marching behind her with a group of Vietnam veterans. But soon, she began to realize the impact of her presence. "They came out of the crowd into the street and kissed me. And they asked me to talk to their parents. That's when I knew I had to form P-FLAG," says Jeanne, as quoted in the introduction of the recently published *Uncommon Heroes*.

P-FLAG was officially launched in 1981, with a total of 20 chapters. Today, there are more than 350 affiliates spread across the U.S., 11 in Canada, and a handful in other countries including Australia, England, France, and Israel. Growth has been spurred in recent years by organized attacks on the rights of gays and lesbians. Parents with gay sons and lesbian daughters began to see their own children being vilified by politicians and ministers, and like the Manfords, they were propelled to action.

While P-FLAG Houston's roots go back to the 1970s (Annella Harrison, mother of Patrick McIlvain, participated in early efforts to form the national organization), the local chapter has experienced tremendous growth over the last three years. Today, we mail our monthly newsletter to more than 700 persons, have 250 dues-paying members, and counted 125 people at our last meeting.

Virtually every meeting is an attendance record-breaker. Parents and other family members, gay men and lesbians, and supportive persons in the community including counselors, ministers, and mental health professionals, fill the pews at our meeting place — St. Francis Episcopal Church at 345 Piney Point. Meetings begin with a program, such as a panel of ministers discussing religious concerns, or youth from HATCH talking about their experiences at home and school. After a short break, we divide into small groups for discussions. Truly, these sessions are the heart of P-FLAG, offering an environment where each individual can speak from the heart. Sitting in a circle, we listen, nurture, cry, laugh, console, and rejoice. Most of all, we learn — from each other, from the community of experience represented, and in the end, from ourselves.

Overall, P-FLAG's mission is threefold: to support families, to educate the public, and to advocate for equal rights. Typically, parents come to their first P-FLAG meeting needing support. As they learn about homosexuality, meet lesbians

by
Gail
Rickey

"Parents began to see their own children being vilified by politicians and ministers, and they were propelled to action. . ."

and gay men, and interact with other parents who are concerned about the well-being of their sons and daughters, they become advocates — and activists!

Last year, P-FLAG Houston embarked on a new venture: presenting an educational event titled "Healing the Hurt: A Conference on Homophobia." When we began planning the event, Oregon and Colorado were still reeling from hate-filled anti-gay initiatives, and gays-in-the-military was the top story in the news. We knew we had to speak out. If all we were able to do was to save one young person from suffering the fear of rejection and the pain of isolation that our own children had endured, if we could sensitize one school counselor or minister or therapist to the problem, if we could energize one more person to stand up for our gay and lesbian children, then our work would be worth the effort.

With grateful hearts, we welcomed 340 attendees, far surpassing our original goal. Keynote speaker Dee Mosbacher honored us with a showing of her video, "Straight from the Heart," which was recently nominated for an Academy Award in the Documentary Short category! Importantly, the conference — designed to educate — did much more. Minute by minute, hour by hour,

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In this space every month, HGLPC News will feature a different lesbian or gay organization from Houston. Next month's planned feature is Twenty Something, a group for young people who "graduate" from HATCH.

Report

News of Caucus Activities

Brentwood

by Mitchell Katine

Maurice "Mo" Jones died February 5, 1995, at the age of 43 from complications due to AIDS. Dr. Jones worked for the Houston Department of Health and Human Service in the HIV education and prevention planning group. For the past two years he served on the Ryan White Planning Council. Prior to that he chaired the Greater Houston AIDS Alliance board and sat on the boards of AFH and Body Positive. While adopting tactics different from those of more radical activists, Mo Jones recognized the value of people in the streets *and* at the table. His contributions and commitment to our community will be missed.

Beginning this month, every new member you bring into the Caucus will earn you a \$5.00 rebate off your annual membership dues. This applies only to people who have never joined the HGLPC or whose membership has been expired for over one year. Credit for up to six new members per year will be allowed. What could be easier? Six new members, great benefits for the Caucus, and a free membership for yourself. Get your address books out and start saving money today!

Last November, the City of Houston blocked desperately needed housing for persons with AIDS, denying funding because of "Not-In-My-Back-Yard" protests by a few vocal neighborhood opponents in the Brentwood subdivision. Now Brentwood Baptist Church, represented by the Clark Read Civil Liberties Foundation, has sued under the federal Fair Housing Act to overcome this blatant discrimination.

The case is vitally important. We cannot tolerate official deference to bigotry of any kind; we must ensure that federal law fulfills its promise — that housing discrimination against persons with AIDS is just as unlawful as any other housing discrimination.

Expanding after five years of providing services for persons with AIDS, Brentwood Baptist Church determined to build housing for persons with AIDS. The City's chosen review committee unanimously approved the proposal, which then was approved by the housing department. With seven other proposals, Brentwood AIDS housing was recommended to City Council. The other proposals won easy approval, but protests by Brentwood's opponents led City Council to deny Brentwood's funding.

The discrimination was explicit. City Councilmember Al Calloway proclaimed: "Every community has a right to establish its own level of tolerance for what it will tolerate in the neighborhood." He candidly admitted the City's refusal to fund was "a political solution." He concluded: "It's ludicrous to compare a disease to racial discrimination." (*Post and Chronicle*, 11/17/94).

Brentwood Baptist Church scheduled meetings, and made telephone calls, to try to break the impasse. Ultimately, with options exhausted, the suit was filed.

The Reverend Joe Ratliff, of Brentwood Baptist Church, has expressed hope that the suit will spark renewed dialogue and enable construction of the PWA housing. Unfortunately, around the country there are too many examples where rationality has not prevailed, and only a court order has protected persons against discrimination. Worse, many times needed court orders have not been forthcoming. We must try to encourage a rapid negotiated settlement, while mobilizing.

Write the Mayor, write City Council members, making clear that fighting discrimination is a critical issue for you. (You might send a copy of your letter to the Pastor at Brentwood Baptist Church, 13033 Landmark, Houston, Texas 77045). Money, of course, will be critical, for this and related battles. I urge you to send a donation to the Clark Read Civil Liberties Foundation, Post Office Box 66386, Houston, Texas 77266, which provided the lawyer for this case.

I serve as a member of the Board of the Clark Read Civil Liberties Foundation. The Clark Read Civil Liberties Foundation works to promote civil liberties and civil rights of all people in the Houston area. We have a long history of protecting persons with AIDS:

- ▼ we established the first local AIDS legal hotline;
- ▼ we represented a man whose blood was tested for HIV without his consent; and

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Brentwood, continued from page 4

- ▼ we represented a woman who was fired from her job for volunteering with AIDS Foundation Houston.

This is only a start.

More generally, protection of fair housing, and protection of persons with disabilities, is a priority. The Clark Read Civil Liberties Foundation offers an important resource for gay and lesbian advocates. Everyone is encouraged to call our legal director, David Kahne, at (713) 524-6021, to discuss issues that may merit legal attention.

Mr. Kahne comes to the Foundation with a background in housing development as well as litigation. In the grand scheme, the Clark Read Civil Liberties Foundation would like to make a lawyer available to each group of civil rights and civil liberties advocates — on litigation and non-litigation matters. When funding permits, we will provide non-lawyer staff as well.

Civil rights battles were won in the 1960s, when advocates made common cause around issues of common concern. I know the Clark Read Civil Liberties Foundation will play an important role in revitalizing civil rights in Houston and nationally. This case is one blow for liberty. May there be many more.

Lincoln Project

by Dale Carpenter

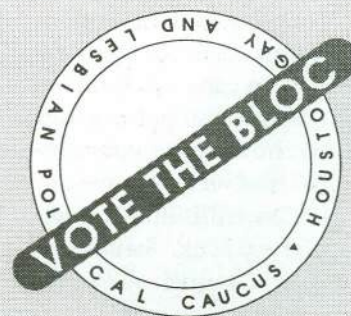
The Lincoln Project, a committee of moderates and conservatives in the HGLPC, continues to grow and expand its degree of involvement in the gay civil rights movement in Houston. It now counts almost a dozen members, most of whom are new to the HGLPC and to political involvement in general.

Fresh on the heels of their successful work for Cynthia Crowe for County Court at Law No. 4, Lincoln Project members are now planning a host of other activities. Members of the Lincoln Project will be assigned to monitor the votes of moderate and conservative office-holders in Houston, both at the city and state level. They will make contact with the legislators and then lobby them for support on bills important to gay and lesbian civil rights. Lincoln Project members will also monitor various media outlets, responding by letter or phone call when anti-gay slurs or stereotypes are broadcast or published. The Lincoln Project will also be engaged in grass-roots activism in the Harris County Republican Party to counter the anti-gay rhetoric and power of the religious right.

Lincoln Project meetings are held the last Wednesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting will be on March 29. The location of the March meeting is yet to be determined. For more information or to find out the location of the March 29 meeting, call Lincoln Project co-chair Dale Carpenter at 758-3293.

Serving in Silence: the Margarethe Cammermeyer Story aired nationwide Monday, February 6, on NBC. Produced by Barbra Streisand and starring Glenn Close in the title role, the show covered the ouster of Col. Margarethe Cammermeyer from the U.S. Army Reserves for admitting she is a lesbian during a security clearance check. The program also dealt extensively with Col. Cammermeyer's relationship with a woman named Diane. The final scene in which the two women kissed caused quite a stir among right-wing groups, who tried unsuccessfully to prevent the scene from being shown. To express your appreciation for pro-queer television, call or write NBC.

At the next HGLPC meeting on Wednesday, March 1, beginning at 7:30 PM, a bold new plan will be unveiled to create a D.F.Z., beginning right here in Montrose. Come to the March meeting and learn about the D.F.Z. and how it will change our City.



Calendar

The next meeting will be held March 1, 1995, at the offices at 2700 Albany, beginning at 7:30 PM.

Lincoln Project will meet March 29, 1995. Location TBA.

Regular Political Action Working Group meetings will be held Thursdays at the offices at 2700 Albany, starting at 6:30 PM.

The ITC working group meets Thursdays at 2700 Albany, starting at 7:30 PM.

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Of course, my final goal was to claim victory on election day. Not achieving that is no reflection on the heart and effort of those of you who volunteered, nor on the contributions of those who supported me financially.

If Dallas, Austin; and Galveston can elect gay candidates, I know Houston can and will. Each race is a step on that path. I hope those who chose not to vote this time will realize that victory is possible.

I'll leave this final thought. Abe Lincoln, Harvey Milk, Sheila Jackson Lee and Newt Gingrich all lost three races before they won one. I don't plan on losing another race. Do you?

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healing happened. Families embraced. Fathers cried. A minister reached out to hug the mother of a gay child saying, "My sister is lesbian."

"I'm beginning to see that working for understanding about gays and lesbians leads to addressing other forms of oppression," said one person. "I feel so empowered by what I've experienced today," said a gay man. "I'm through with closets." Perhaps the highest praise came from a police officer. "I felt so much love here today. And there was no pretentiousness. People were so sincere."

Inspired by our success, we immediately began planning Healing the Hurt '95, to be presented Friday, March 31 and Saturday, April 1, at the Sheraton Astrodome. The roster of presenters is star-studded, headed by keynote speakers David Mixner, who mobilized the gay and lesbian supportive community nationally to elect Bill Clinton as president, and the Reverend Dr. Janie Spahr, an ordained Presbyterian minister, who, as a lesbian, is an evangelist on behalf of inclusiveness for gays and lesbians.

Many of our workshop leaders also have national prominence. They include Eric Marcus, author of *Is It a Choice?*; Leroy Aarons, author of a soon-to-be-published book on a gay youth who committed suicide; and Greg King, former communications director of the Human Rights Campaign Fund. Of special interest, Annise Parker and Dianne Hardy-Garcia will help lead one of the four interactive sessions on Saturday, titled "Civil Rights/Human Rights."

During the conference P-FLAG Houston will present our first National Human Rights Award for Bravery, to be awarded to a person who has taken the most risks, personally or professionally, on behalf of the cause of gay and lesbian equality. Nominations are being made by P-FLAG chapters across the country.

P-FLAG Houston meets on the first Sunday of every month (unless it's a holiday weekend, when the meeting is on the second Sunday) from 2 PM to 4:30 PM. For more information about the conference, our meetings, or other services we offer, call 867-9020.

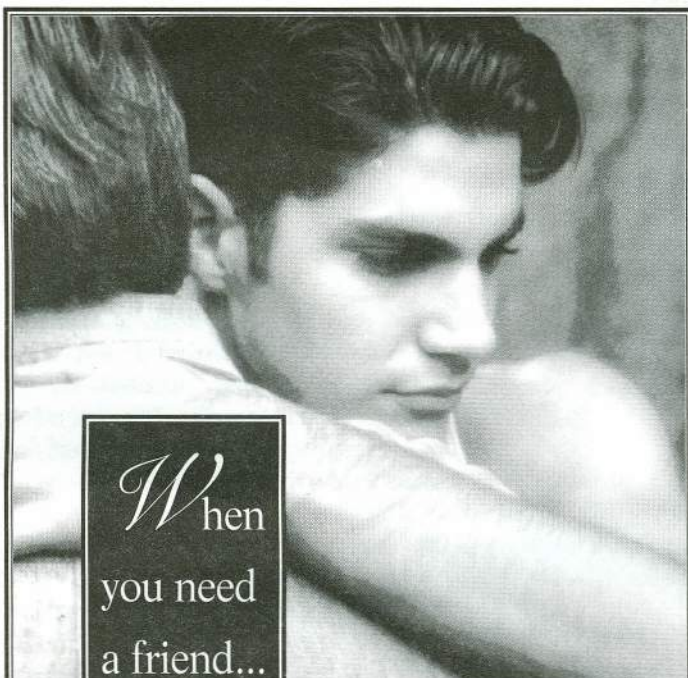
Message, continued from page 2

join HGLPC. I intend to be at 2700 Albany every Thursday night from 6:30 to 8:00 to work with the new committee organizing our grassroots efforts across the City. I intend to take off work on Election Day and knock on doors and drag people to the polls, if I have to, to raise the Montrose precincts above the pitiful 14.23 percent voter turnout that we saw when our own Annise Parker ran for City Council last month.

We are the future of Houston. We are the political activists of the gay and lesbian community, and if we do not do it, it will not happen, not now or maybe ever. Two or three or five hours a week will make the difference we are looking for. Make 1995 the year you rededicate yourself to the fight for your own civil rights, the fight that has moved from the streets into the voting booths. We can make a difference there. Take the pledge with me. Support HGLPC's efforts with your time and resources. You will never wish you hadn't, but you may always wish you had.

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HGLPCNews

HOUSTON GAY & LESBIAN POLITICAL CAUCUS

Delinquent Adults?

by
Norm
Thompson

Your goal tonight is to endure three minutes of intense physical attack — beating, if we cut to the chase — from a half-dozen or so of your “homies.” Sure, you can fight back, and you will, but you’re outnumbered six-to-one, as well as by the alcohol and drugs you consumed in order to intensify your courage and desensitize you to the pain. Tonight’s pain, after all, will pale compared to that you have felt in the short lifetime which brings you to this moment. Besides, there’s a bonus which comes from undergoing this abuse, abuse which did not accompany your survival of a lifetime of mistreatment that brought you to today. Tonight, you become part of a “family.” No question this is not the family you had envisioned in your younger days, but you’ve already spent seventeen years waiting for your dream family to become a reality. Seventeen years, and your mind bears scars one eighty years your senior is unlikely to have seen. Tonight you are reborn, yet each mental scar will continue to serve as the foundation for your “new life.”

Perhaps the above scenario doesn’t apply to you. You have managed to avoid becoming a gang member despite the abuses you have been forced to handle. You have chosen the path obvious to so many righteous, unaffected advisors. “Abused? That’s no excuse, get out of that situation.” Congratulations: You’ve fought the odds, avoided the gang, and removed yourself from your tormenting environment! But it’s getting late, it’s turning chilly, and that burger you had for lunch two days ago has sustained you for about as long as it is going to. Holding to your principles and convictions, you passed up the opportunity to turn a few disco bags of cocaine, although the money would have put food into your stomach, perhaps even afforded you a night’s stay at the Montague. You’ve done the right things, your convictions are still intact, and yet your reality remains the same: cold, hungry, and on the streets. You now find yourself at that point of awareness of reality too often casually dismissed as “life-or-death.” *This is the point at which failure to die creates the burden to survive.*

The driver’s window rolls down, and you are offered a few bucks in exchange for a few moments of your time and body. Accepting the offer, you compromise your principles and health. You will survive tonight, and you’ve succeeded in victimizing no one. . . but yourself! The most critical judgment society will pass upon you will never compare to that judgment which you will pass upon yourself: You now measure your worth using the monetary system.

Resorting to the desperate attempt to rationalize your compromise, you may slip unawares into valuing your own worth by the use of a kind of creative accounting — a system of self-deceit which allows you to turn the twenty dollars you got for a few minutes of street sex into an hourly wage of a hundred

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What’s New?

This month *HGLPC News* focusses on queer youth, with two Houston organizations — **HATCH** and **20Something** — featured inside. Our cover story from Norm Thompson reviews life on the streets for homeless gay and lesbian youth.

In addition, Cicely Wynne and Terri Richardson unveil the Political Action activities for the year in this month’s center spread. **Precinct organization, PAC fundraising, and voter education and motivation** are key elements to the plan.

Hope you enjoy this month’s issue!

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HGLPC News
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(713) 521-1000

On one hand, most gay men and lesbians do not have children. A few, yes, but not most. And until the laws are eliminated which currently infringe on the ability of gay men and lesbians to adopt children, become artificially inseminated, and contract for surrogacy, gays and lesbians will continue to be, for the most part, childless. On the other hand, most gay and lesbian children do not have queer parents. A few, yes, but not most. And until people like Pat Buchanan and Jesse Helms and Steven Hotze either become educated or just shut up and go away, gay and lesbian children will, for the most part, continue to be misunderstood.

This leads us to an obvious intersection. We can lend the understanding ear and broad shoulder that are needed by the gay and lesbian children and teenagers in our community, and at the same time experience a bit of the joys and rewards that come from interacting with youth. It doesn't get much simpler than that.

The Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus is committed to providing positive, healthy leadership for the gay and lesbian youth of Houston who may be interested in exploring political activism. In December, the Caucus voted unanimously to form a "Youth Caucus" within the HGLPC, in an effort to establish a Mentor/Protege Program for the youth of our community. The Caucus offers discounted membership fees to its younger members, and pledges to devote the time and energy necessary to make this program a beneficial one to gays and lesbians of all ages. I find myself again in the position of asking for your help. With the increased efforts toward voter registration and education, the Caucus's personal resources are stretched, and many of the activities encompassing the Lesbian & Gay Voter Project are tailor-made for lesbian and gay youth. Our need is greater now than ever before for new, energetic young women and men to move us forward.

If you are interested in helping to organize or coordinate the "mentor" side of the Mentor/Protege Program, please volunteer at the April 5 general meeting, or call 521-1000.

This issue of *HGLPC News* is dedicated to members of HATCH, 20Something, and other lesbian and gay youth of Houston.

HATCH, from page 3

This year HATCH will be having its Third Annual Prom Nite during Pride Week —the group's major annual fundraiser. HATCH hopes that the community will support its effort in providing services to our youth and to continue our advocacy efforts in the public schools.

As a support group for gay/lesbian youth in Houston, HATCH is unique. No other organization in the city targets its services to this group. As such it deserves the support of the entire community. For more information contact the HATCH line at (713) 942-7002.

Youth

This Month's Feature

HATCH empowers Houston teens

by
Kevin
Davidson

HATCH — Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals — formed in 1987 as a support group for youth who identify themselves as lesbian or gay. Through word of mouth a small group met weekly, and in 1991, through the efforts of Jay Asher and Trish Morgan, HATCH became dramatically recognized through local newspaper and gay and lesbian publications. In 1991 HATCH was established as a 501(c)(3).

HATCH's vision is to achieve a climate of societal acceptance and understanding without regard to sexual identity. The mission of HATCH is to provide safe social environments for homosexual youth, offer role models and peer support, and sponsor educational and community outreach opportunities to empower homosexual youth to become positive contributors to society.

The organization offers several support groups every Friday evening. One is an Open Discussion Group for those youth who want to share their immediate concerns; a second group, Gay/Lesbian Issues, is for those who wish to explore areas of concern to gay and lesbian youth. Parents are invited to HATCH to learn more about the organization and to talk about their concerns for being a parent of a gay or lesbian teen. On Sundays, there is an opportunity to discuss topics, or see a film or video that provokes discussion on gay and lesbian topics.

Every Friday meeting also features community speakers. Community members offer their experiences and knowledge to the youth in numerous areas, including employment and career options, personal relations, health and AIDS education, art and entertainment, sports, family issues and many others. HATCH youth gain insight and peer support through sharing these experiences.

The group's directors and facilitators continue to contact area school counselors, teachers, and administrators to advocate gay and lesbian issues. Due to high suicide rates and self-esteem issues among gay/lesbian youth, it is HATCH's objective to promote public education and awareness of the personal rights and civil liberties of the homosexual community.

In 1994, HATCH had the opportunity to sponsor and participate in school programs, workshops, and conferences. The youth have presented their experiences dealing with being a gay or lesbian teenager and dealing with their heterosexual counterparts. Conferences have included the Houston Psychological Association Continuing Education Workshop, P-FLAG Healing the Hurt Conference, and Houston Independent School District Inservice for Secondary Counselors.

It is HATCH's objective to promote public education and awareness of the personal rights and civil liberties of the homosexual community . . .

continued on page 2

***The Streets*, from page 1**

• dollars per hour. Such a wage could entice well-paid executives to abandon
• their jobs, except for the fact that the meter actually runs for only a few minutes
• a day. Should you become the most sought-after and highest paid prostitute
• around, you will discover in short order that expenses of addictions will quickly
• consume the income; this week's star is replaced by next week's star, and when
• you ultimately change careers, then "Clerk, Stop-n-Go" serves to be far more
• valuable as a reference on your résumé.

• The advice most frequently offered this aging baby boomer continues to be
• that I "cease hanging around the wrong people." The advice never changes; the
• definition of who the wrong people are is constantly modified as a result of
• pressure to achieve political correctness. At this stage of my life I find today's
• youth bearing the burden of such societal judgment. Our one hand holds them
• up to be the leaders of the future; our other disdainfully shakes a pointing finger
• identifying them as being responsible for most of the ills of today's society.

• Both of the above scenarios represent actual experiences of several people
• with whom my life has been blessed — relatively tame compared to
• the lives of some, extreme and unimaginable to others. Certainly
• aware of the elements which would cause me to avoid meeting
• strangers, I am grateful both for my ability to slip between the
• defense mechanisms we all project and the willingness of some
• wonderful people to open themselves to the vulnerability of this
• stranger. I find myself repeatedly rewarded with the privilege of
• witnessing the evolution of these young lives, many of whom never
• knew happiness and self-respect to be rewards of life to which they
• were entitled.

Our community, I fear, is failing to satisfy our responsibility to
our youth, and likewise failing to experience the wondrous gifts
from their association. Rare would be the political activist who
would deny parenting to be one of our rights denied, yet rare are

• those within our community who accept parenting to be one of our responsibili-
• ties. Always close at hand are those who warn of the potential for false criminal
• accusations. While the risks of such accusations increase as a result of associat-
• ing with our youth, we have been stereotypically charged all along with "re-
• cruiting." Our practice of ageism and our maintenance of a "safe" distance from
• our youth perpetuate the single most damaging effect on the lives of our
• nation's troubled and eventually troublesome young people.

• Existentialism and abuse undermine the foundation upon which too many
• of today's youth construct their character. *Identifying* this reality to be a deficit
• in traditional family values may very well score an A+, should we be doing an
• analysis; *perpetuating* this reality as a community indeed keeps us "just like
• everyone else." Certainly we are always fighting society's efforts to hang that
• "special interest" label on us. Surely our ability to provide a positive, friendly,
• supportive, loving, and a non-abusive influence on the lives of the developing

continued on page 5

***Our community, I fear, is failing to
satisfy our responsibility to our
youth, and likewise failing to
experience the wondrous gifts from
their association. . .***

The Streets, from page 4

leaders of tomorrow can be a special characteristic of us as a people, the label of which we could and should wear with pride.

Had my generation succeeded in fulfilling our idealistic hopes and dreams and meeting our responsibilities as we once collectively defined those responsibilities, then those young leaders of tomorrow should be the leaders of today. While not assuming our perceptions of what a leadership role is, today's youth are undeniably influencing the definition of our future as well as their own. Will that future bring us closer to fulfilling our hopes and dreams, or will it prove our worst nightmares to have been an accurate prediction? Our failure to meet our self-determined level of responsibility shall be the only place to lay blame at such time as we either choose or are forced to leave this place called denial.

Clearly recognizing my generation as being in an intense state of shock, let us not fail to be aware that today's youth are affected by the same traumatic events, but armed with twenty years' less experience as well as a re-organized listing of survival priorities. Perhaps the time has not yet come for us to begin the healing process which will eventually lift our community from the grip of traumatic shock. Perhaps we have yet to experience the full impact of nightmares becoming reality. Perhaps the time has come to abandon the notion of experiencing our hopes and dreams. If we are not prepared to resign ourselves to such a pessimistic outlook, we must nonetheless cease our denial of the truth that so many — indeed, so many of our *young* people — have already, understandably, so resigned themselves.

Yes, organizations within our community offer help and have their success stories. Several former street hustlers have testified to me that their lives were saved, as well as turned around, because of H.I.P.Y. (Houston Institute for the Protection of Youth). I have witnessed confused and depressed teens realize their right to experience happiness as a result of their surrogate family at HATCH (Houston Area Teen Coalition of Homosexuals). This Caucus has provided complimentary tickets to the annual banquet, allowing several future leaders to converse with judges at the dinner table rather than from the defendant's table.

These diverse organizations, no doubt willing to be of benefit to all, can be expected only to fill certain proscribed needs. The time is past due for the development and expansion of new and existing organizations for the development and life enhancement of the youth of our community. Time is past due as well to stop allowing our fear of a homophobic society to serve as an excuse for our failure to assume role model positions as big brother, sister, surrogate parent, and friend to the children of *our* family.

New group attracts Gen-Xers

by Connie Gray

20Something of Houston is a group of gays and lesbians ages 20 to 29. Its purpose is to provide a safe social and informative environment, where young gay men and lesbians can meet to discuss life issues and establish friendships outside the bar scene.

The group meets at 7:30 every Thursday. After a time of introductions and calendar information a speaker is presented, with opportunities for discussion by all. Past programming has included speakers for groups such as P-FLAG, Q-Patrol, The Switchboard, and HGLPC, to name a few.

The last Thursday of every month the group gathers at 7:30 to go to dinner together.

Social activities are planned for most weekends. Opportunities have included Aeros games, HGO's *Harvey Milk*, movie nights, etc. Weekend trips have been taken to San Antonio, Austin, and Dallas. Future plans include a camping trip and a weekend in New Orleans.

April 11th (a Tuesday night) a special workshop "Boy to Boy" will be presented. It is for guys (18 - 29) who like guys to come together and talk about relationships, safer sex, intimacy, and first dates. A similar workshop for lesbians is in the planning process.

20Something is socially and politically involved, and service

continued on page 10

Report

News of Caucus Activities

Betsy Lake visits Lincoln Project

by Dale Carpenter

Betsy Lake, chair of the Harris County Republican Party, spoke to members of the Lincoln Project on February 22. Mary Easterly, Executive Director of the county organization, attended the meeting with Lake. In her address, Lake emphasized her desire for an inclusive Republican Party that would not be beholden to the party's far right wing. Lake also highlighted ways that gay Republicans could be involved at the grass-roots level to counter the influence of fringe elements. In response to questions from Lincoln Project members, she said that gay involvement would be welcomed by most moderates and even conservatives within the party. Lake eagerly pledged to help HGLPC members become involved in the local party organization.

On February 25 Lincoln Project members registered voters and signed up new people for the HGLPC mailing list. The four-hour registration and membership drive was conducted at three Montrose stores: Kroger, Lobo, and Basic Brothers. In all, Project members registered almost 50 new voters, placed almost 100 people on the mailing list, and signed up nine new Caucus members.

The Lincoln Project is sponsoring a reception in Austin on April 1

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Caucus starting early to elect

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus. During that time period, the Caucus has grown from a few gay men meeting in the extra room of a noisy bar to one of the largest, most influential gay and lesbian political organizations in the country.

The Caucus is moving in a bold direction. The commitment of time and resources to a single project has never been greater than for the political activities that are currently being undertaken. Grassroots precinct organizing, technologically progressive voter identification, advanced funding for gay and lesbian political candidates, an intense voter registration effort, and the birth of the Lesbian & Gay Voter Project, which is potentially the most daring project of its kind anywhere, make involvement with the HGLPC one of the single most important things a lesbian or gay man can do.

Citywide Precinct Organizing

Weekly political action working group meetings have involved some of the most exciting work the Caucus has undertaken in years. So far, using data produced by ITC for the Annise Parker campaign, the group has identified and mapped all precincts containing more than twenty voters likely to be gay or lesbian. From there, precincts have been grouped into areas around the city, each of which is to have an area captain.

The next step is to identify Caucus members as area captains and set up training sessions for neighborhood parties to be held in late spring and summer. Bringing the organization to the precinct level not only empowers people to become politically active, it expands the gay and lesbian community's power throughout the city.

Lesbian & Gay Voter Project

Patterned after the successful Southwest Voter Project in the Hispanic community, the Lesbian & Gay Voter Project is planned to be tax-deductible so that funds can be used for unprecedented direct-mail voter registration, education, and motivation in our community.

In order to establish 501(c)(3) tax status, the HGLPC will have to launch the Project as an independent organization that is only involved in registration and education, not electioneering or lobbying.

The object, of course, is to increase the number of voting gay men and lesbians, which can only help an openly gay or lesbian candidate get elected.

The Lesbian & Gay Voter Project wants to making voting the "in" thing to do during early voting and on election day. The top priority on election day is **voting**. It's so cool to vote, you pick up your friends, vote, then go to lunch and a movie.

gay/lesbian candidates

Caucus PAC collecting funds

HGLPC plans to give endorsed openly gay and lesbian City Council candidates a much-needed head start for November city elections.

Like any PAC, the HGLPC-PAC can collect funds from individuals all year, long before our candidates announce. The PAC is already seeking donations so at least \$5,000 will be set aside before any gay or lesbian candidate officially announces and begins collecting money. After the Caucus endorses candidates in October, the Caucus PAC can donate up to \$5,000 to a candidate.

A \$5,000 nest egg could mean the difference between victory and defeat for an openly lesbian or gay candidate this fall: 25,000 more pieces of mail, TV commercials in a citywide race, a professional campaign manager.

Thousands of dollars can be raised painlessly: 100 people sending 4 post-dated \$15 checks equals \$6,000.

If you can donate \$10-\$15 a month for the next few months, just make out several post-dated checks to HGLPC-PAC (for example, April 1, May 1, June 1, and July 1) and place the checks in the enclosed envelope. Or mail to: HGLPC-PAC, P.O. Box 66664, Houston, TX 77266-6664.

Of course, HGLPC-PAC also accepts single checks.

Only individuals who contribute a total of \$50.01 or more will be listed on the Caucus PAC report, which is submitted to the state.

As the Human Rights Campaign Fund and the Victory Fund have proven, PACs are one of the smartest way to elect openly gay or lesbian candidates.

\$300 Poster Contest

As we learned in the last special City Council election, many gay men, lesbians, transgendered people, and bisexuals don't vote. Far too many aren't even registered.

The Caucus has been registering and educating voters for almost 20 years, yet many people in our community still don't understand the importance of electing openly gay or lesbian candidates.

It's time to join the Advertising Age. Voter project organizers hope a poster and ad campaign will help convince our diverse community to register and vote.

A \$300 prize will be awarded to the winning poster. Deadline is May 15.

The poster will be unveiled June 14 (Flag Day) during Pride Week. The artwork also may be used for an ad campaign in the fall and other promotional activity.

The poster must be the artist's original work. Two versions of the poster must be presented: one black and white; the second in color. The color version must be reproducible using standard two- or three-color printing methods.

For more information, call HGLPC at (713) 521-1000.

Proposed Bylaw Change

At the April meeting an amendment to the HGLPC bylaws will be introduced.

The current preamble and mission statement has antiquated language that needs to be updated for gay and lesbian politics of the 90s. A re-write of the mission statement was begun over a year ago.

Presentation and discussion of the new language will be held in April, but voting on the measure cannot be held until May under current rules governing bylaw amendments.

Resignations

Two board members resigned their positions in early March.

Rob Cavanaugh, former Caucus secretary and longtime community activist, stepped down for health reasons. A past newsletter chair, Rob was named Volunteer-of-the-Year in 1993. During his most recent board term, Rob served as vice chair.

Jim Ewing also stepped down in March because of a busy work schedule. Jim was the principal organizer of both the 1994 HGLPC Annual Dinner and last summer's highly successful Estate Sale.

Both Jim and Rob plan to remain active in Caucus leadership. Elections will be held at the April meeting to fill the two vacant board seats.

Events

This Month... This Year

HGLPC co-founder dies at 40

Keith McGee passed away Monday, March 20, 1995, after a long battle with AIDS.

Keith was instrumental in the early formation of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus twenty years ago. He served among the Caucus's first officers. He most recently sat on the Board in 1993 - 1994.

On the national scene, he helped found the National Gay Task Force in the early 1970s.

Memorial services were held Wednesday, March 22.

Keith's commitment to the struggle for gay and lesbian equal rights has been unflagging since he was a teenager. He will be greatly missed.

HGLPC Board Meetings

have been moved to 7 p.m.

on the second Wednesday of every month. The next

Board meeting will be at

2700 Albany, April 12, 7 p.m.

March 29 Lincoln Project. Baby Barnaby's, 604 Fairview, 7 p.m.

March 30 Screening Process Review Committee. 2700 Albany, 7:30 p.m.

March 30 - April 2 The Names Project. The AIDS Memorial Quilt will be on display at the George R. Brown Convention Center

April 2 March on Austin. Gather at Palmer Auditorium at 12 noon.

April 3 Lobby Day in Austin. Call LGRL at (512) 474-5475 for details. Training will be provided.

April 5 HGLPC General Meeting. Board elections, bylaw change. 2700 Albany, 7:30 p.m.

April 12 HGLPC Board Meeting. 2700 Albany, 7 p.m. (*new time!*)

May 15 Voter Poster Contest submissions due. \$300 prize! Call (713) 521-1000 for more details.

June 14 Voter Poster Contest winner is announced.

June 18 Spectrum '95. Astroarena. Call (713) 526-2853 for more info.

October 14 HGLPC Annual Dinner. Place TBA. (*This date is subject to change!*)

You can stand up to hatred.
Or you can take it lying down.



The Texas
Stop the Violence, Stop the Hate
March on Austin to the Capitol
April 2, 1995

Austin weekend features march and lobbying

The Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas, along with countless other queer organizations across the state, is sponsoring the *Stop the Violence, Stop the Hate* march on the capitol, followed by a day of lobbying.

The march begins at noon, April 2, at Palmer Auditorium in Austin. Wear sensible shoes and your favorite political T-shirt.

For more information on April 3 lobbying, call LGRL at (512) 474-5475.

P-FLAG/Houston hosts national conference

For the second year in a row the local P-FLAG chapter will be hosting a conference on homophobia.

Healing the Hurt '95 will be held March 31 and April 1 at the Sheraton Astrodome. The event offers "professionals and the general public the opportunity to examine the myths, misinformation, and misleading stereotypes about gays and lesbians."

Keynote speakers Rev. Janie Spahr and David Mixner lead the cast of prominent workshop presenters.

To register call (713) 867-9020.

Lincoln, from page 6

for Rich Tafel, Executive Director of the national Log Cabin Republicans. Tafel will be in Austin for the April 2 march, where he will be one of three featured speakers. The reception will be Saturday, April 1, from 7 to 10 p.m. at the 10th floor Atrium of the Sheraton Austin Hotel, which is at 6th Street and I-35. Admission is \$25 per person.

The next meeting of the Lincoln Project will be Wednesday, March 29, at 7:00 p.m. at Baby Barnaby's, 604 Fairview. Members and guests are invited to stay for dinner at Barnaby's after the meeting. For more information, call Dale Carpenter at 758-3293.

20Something, from page 5

projects are also planned.

There are no dues for membership at this time, but occasionally contributions are requested to defray cost of the answering service and post office box. If you are gay, lesbian, or bisexual between the ages of 20 and 29, add some spark to your life and come meet this vital, energizing group.

ITC Update

by John Freeman

Starting with the Reagan Revolution of 1980, direct marketing has increasingly shaped the American political landscape. Conservative groups, applying the same basic techniques used to sell Ginsu knives and Columbia Record Club memberships, have raised funds, influenced public opinion, and won elections. Ironically, they were taught these techniques by people such as Terry Dolan and Kurt Klinscales, both gay men, albeit closeted.

Political organizations such as HGLPC have been slow to adopt techniques employed by the "right wing." The Information and Technology Committee, however, hopes to change this. We are developing the tools needed to launch and manage successful marketing campaigns.

Our top priority is development of a database, as opposed to a simple mailing list. The "Big List" has been broken into multiple databases: membership, individuals, businesses, and organizations, with current focus on membership and individuals.

The Membership Database, expanded to include greater information on members, will be easily accessible to board members, officers, and committee chairs on the computer at the Caucus office, reducing dependence on ITC for access to data. It should be on line by April 5.

The Individuals Database is the remnants of the Caucus mailing list. Our focus is voter identification. We have successfully posted precinct numbers to 90% of the persons in Harris County. We are working on posting voter certificate numbers, which is a much slower process due to the lack of standardization. For several Montrose precincts, we have identified who is registered and who actually voted in the last election. We hope to have this completed by April 15 for the entire database.

This Individuals Database is a critical component for future work. It makes little difference what our message is if we have no audience to deliver it to. For this reason, we are very concerned that the number of individuals in the database has declined significantly as we have purged duplicates and incorrect addresses.

In an effort to add new names, we are exploring such options as sharing data with other community organizations, purchasing data from professional direct marketers, and soliciting information at community events. We are working with the Pride Committee to gather information at the Art Festival through drawings for free CDs to encourage people to provide us with names and addresses.

The next several months will be busy. We are working with voter registration lists, election results, political contributor lists, and census tract data to target our audience. We are exploring other technologies, such as fax on demand, fax broadcast, electronic mail, Internet access, and voice messaging to improve our communications with each other and with the public. Test mailings are planned to learn more about our existing data. Volunteers are needed to help with these projects. Please contact either Mike Stubblefield at 526-3425 or John Freeman at 526-3851.

HGLPCNews

HOUSTON GAY & LESBIAN POLITICAL CAUCUS

OutVote to maximize our vote the smart tax-deductible way

by Cicely Wynne

A new Houston organization plans to dramatically increase our community's voting power by using tactics perfected by the Radical Right.

OutVote is designed to raise the kind of money for massive voter registration and sophisticated get-out-the vote efforts that can only be raised through tax-deductible donations. If that approach sounds familiar, it's because it has worked so well for the Radical Right. On a friendlier note, it has also been used by the Southwest Voter Project to increase the Hispanic vote.

After the special City Council election in January, political activists' fears were confirmed when they learned about 40% of the Montrose portion of the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus list is NOT registered to vote. That prompted the Caucus to launch a separate voter project to maximize our potential 10% vote.

Political activists had already identified about 27,000 likely new community voters on the Harris County voter registration list by doing a special database sort for same-sex households.

If granted tax-exempt status, OutVote will be able to reach those 27,000 potential voters, and the 10,000+ on community lists, in an unprecedented way: Voter registration and educational voting information, such as a voter's guide, can be mailed at the lower tax-exempt postal rate, with much of the mailing paid for through tax-deductible donations and grants.

OutVote is already on the fast track to filing an application for tax-exempt 501(c)(3) status by July in hopes of winning IRS approval by September. At the first meeting, April 12, members approved a name and logo, discussed projects, collected dues, and set dates for electing a nine-member board and approving bylaws.

The next meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m., Wednesday, April 26, at the HGLPC office, 2700 Albany, Suite 304. Bylaws will be adopted and projects will be discussed at that meeting. Board members will be elected at the third

Out  vote

GRAPHIC: RYAN WYATT

What's New?

This month's *HGLPC News* features OutVote, the brand new lesbian and gay voter project. Launched by the Caucus last month, OutVote had its first meeting April 12. Our cover story is by OutVote's chair, Cicely Wynne.

Inside, Bryan Vezey introduces the Lincoln Project's initiative to place lesbian and gay Republicans as precinct judges throughout the county.

Also check out ITC's plan for supporting the Caucus's precinct organization and get-out-the-vote efforts.

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Status

A Message from the President

HOUSTON GAY & LESBIAN POLITICAL CAUCUS

Terri Richardson, *President*
Keith Stewart, *Vice President*
Rod Kneblak, *Secretary*
Patrick McKee, *Treasurer*



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Lujack Tyler
Bryan Vezey



HGLPC News
Matthew Huston, *editor*

HGLPC News is a monthly publication of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, which is solely responsible for its contents. HGLPC meets the first Wednesday of every month at its offices, 2700 Albany Street, Suite 304, at 7:30 p.m.

Houston Gay and Lesbian
Political Caucus
P.O. Box 66664
Houston, Texas 77266-6664
(713) 521-1000

OutVote. What a concept. An effort to get gays and lesbians and bisexuals and transgenders to the polls on election day.

by Terri Richardson

An effort to provide a means whereby the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community can receive educational mailings about all the candidates in a particular race. An effort to sophisticate ourselves, to make our voices heard, and to be represented.

We all know that the concept is not a new one. For twenty years, Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus has been tackling the political problems of our diverse community. It has attempted to register voters, to educate the electorate, to screen candidates, and to provide support to our community on election day.

But the Caucus has also been called upon to do much more during these two decades. It has mediated community/police confrontations. It has participated in lobbying efforts both in Austin and Washington, DC. It has led the opposition to City Council redistricting. It has formulated policy and facilitated communication between policymakers and those living with HIV and AIDS. It has marched in parades, appeared on television and radio programs, and hosted speakers at an annual dinner that have included Mayor Art Agnos, Roberta Achtenburg, Andrew Sullivan, and Michelangelo Signorile, to name but a few.

So much has fallen on the Caucus's shoulders over the last twenty years, and so much has been accomplished, but what remains to be done is the grass roots organizing that we first set out to do.

OutVote is the name that has been selected to embody all aspects of this "back to basics" movement. OutVote will spread the message of gay and lesbian participation in the electoral process. OutVote will endeavor to register more voters than ever before, and then to reach those voters with educational materials, and then to turn out lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender voters in greater numbers than we have ever thought possible.

OutVote is the ticket to greater political clout and representation.

OutVote is for the entire community. And OutVote is here now.

Be part of the excitement. Be part of OutVote.

Voting

This Month's Feature

Freedom in the Information Age

by David Westerkamp

A good metaphor for freedom is one comparing it to a living organism. Freedom, like a living thing, requires all the basic essentials if it is to survive, grow, and flourish. It needs a safe and hospitable environment, as well as nourishment and a means to proliferate. Freedom also needs a healthy defense system to ward off challenges to its survival, and to keep it strong and able to compete with ideologies of oppression and despotism.

Narrow and rigid ideologies of religious and social conservatives have gained a firm foothold in American society during the last couple elections. These agents of social intolerance are not going away anytime soon. A chronic middle class anxiety caused by a massive realignment of our economy has fueled this socially conservative movement.

If you have been paying attention to what is going on in Washington, one thing should be very clear. Newt and his disciples are plotting to roll back many of the hard fought freedoms that our community gained over the last 25 years, and now takes for granted. The strength and quality of our response to this challenge, will determine whether or not it will succeed.

The next two years are critical, and there is much work to be done. Regardless of where you see yourself in the political spectrum you must stay well informed and participate in the political process. The competition for ideas to be heard by the voter is keen in this age of the 30-second sound bite.

Newt understands the power of information and the technology used to manipulate it. His rhetoric is littered with references to computers, cyberspace, and the information superhighway. Political organizations that fail to use the technologies of the Information Age are at a severe disadvantage.

The Caucus recognized the need to invest in technology about 18 months ago. Since then, many volunteer hours have been spent developing core strategies that will provide the Caucus with valuable databases and voter information. Information that will help us organize faster and identify our voters beyond the traditional progressive inner-city precincts.

The Information and Technology Committee directly supports several new initiatives by the Caucus, and this is only the beginning.

The Political Action Working Group has been meeting weekly to organize at the precinct level. Their goal is to identify gay and lesbian voters in each precinct, then network at the grassroots level. This effort will hopefully result in recruiting more gay and lesbian precinct chairpersons from both the Democrat and Republican parties. Much of the basic information the Political Action

The competition for ideas to be heard by the voter is keen in this age of the 30-second sound bite. . .

continued on page 5

OutVote, from page 1

meeting, 7 p.m. on May 17, also at the HGLPC office.

Dues were set at only \$5 to encourage broad-based support. According to the proposed bylaws, OutVote's purpose is to "register gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and the transgendered community, educate them about the importance of voting, and motivate them to vote in every election," such as the November City Council elections. If approved as a tax-exempt educational organization, OutVote will not be allowed to endorse candidates or be affiliated with any candidate or political party. It will, however, be allowed to educate voters about how candidates stand on issues relevant to our community as well as about early voting, polling places, and so forth.

Possible projects include:

- ▼ A voter's guide mailed before early voting begins;
- ▼ A fall ad campaign designed to make voting an "in" thing to do;
- ▼ A phone survey to determine why so many people are not registered;
- ▼ Mailing or block walking voter registration cards to unregistered people.

A poster contest is already underway. The poster should motivate people in our community to vote. The deadline is May 15. The winning poster will be unveiled June 14 (Flag Day), with a \$300 prize being given to its designer. Artwork should be submitted according to the same rules as the Lesbian & Gay Pride Week annual theme contest.

For more information about the poster contest or OutVote, call 522-9837.

ITC, from page 3

Working Group will be using in its efforts will be generated by ITC.

Another Caucus initiative being supported by ITC is OutVote, the lesbian and gay voter project. This group is working to reach 501(c)(3) status by late summer. The main goal of this committee is to educate and register people in our community. Becoming a non-profit organization will make it much easier to seek tax deductible donations and lower the cost of postage.

The final work on the mailing list database will be completed soon by the ITC database development team. John Freeman and Mike Stubblefield have spent many hours refining the database into logical units and adding volumes of voter registration information. There is much catch-up maintenance to do. The committee will be resuming maintenance working sessions very soon. Look for scheduling announcements in the May newsletter.

We are reaching out to every ethnic and ideological segment of our community to encourage understanding, involvement and volunteerism. Fresh new approaches and a renewed spirit of common purpose and cooperation among conservatives, moderates, and liberals in our community will help fight the right on all fronts.

These are exciting times for the Caucus, but we need volunteers! If you would like to do your part to fight the right you can volunteer by calling 521-1000.

Report

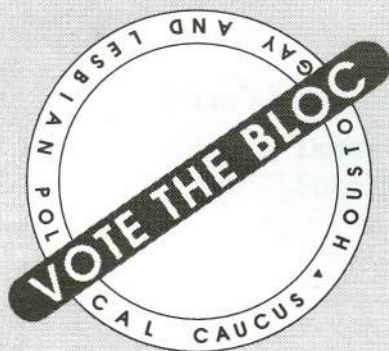
News of Caucus Activities

Change to Bylaws proposed

The Board of Trustees recently reviewed the preamble/mission statement of the HGLPC Bylaws, Article II, and observed that the preamble contains antiquated language, specifically a reference to "homosexual lifestyles." At the request of the Board, Bryan Vezey prepared the following proposed amendment to Article II and presented it to the Caucus membership at the April meeting.

Whereas Article II currently provides that one of the purposes of the HGLPC is to "educate the public with regard to homosexuality and homosexual lifestyles," it is proposed that we simplify the provision to read: "To educate the public about homosexuality."

The proposal will be submitted for a vote at the next meeting on May 3.



Membership Committee needs volunteers now

by Ray Ramirez

The Membership Committee must do some fine tuning, focusing, and growing. Activities the committee need to take on include staffing meetings and events, making follow-up phone calls to members, and coordinating with ITC. And to do this we need volunteers!

The Membership Committee needs volunteers to staff membership tables at monthly meetings. As one of the first contacts potential members make with this organization, the committee should be warm, friendly, and knowledgeable about the Caucus. Volunteers will get to meet new members and guests, and they'll introduce these new members and guests around. The Membership Committee will also maintain sign-in sheets at monthly meetings and at all Caucus functions and activities.

We would also like to have a few volunteers to make follow-up phone calls concerning members' status and to make thank-you calls to new or renewing members. No committee member will make all the phone calls. The phone list for follow-up calls is small and will be divided among as many committee members as possible.

The Membership Committee must work hand-in-hand with the Information and Technology Committee. Because the HGLPC now has computer equipment that will benefit all of the Caucus committees, the committee structure should be ready to produce results with information that is gleaned from ITC. The committee must also feed information to ITC, such as meeting sign-in sheets.

A note about the membership forms: The name of the "sponsoring member" is meant to let us know who referred the new member to us. Remember that each time a member gets another person to join the Caucus, he or she gets \$5 off the membership dues.

If you're a new member and you're not certain what activities pique your interest, please let us know. There are many committees listed on the membership form, and we hope we can interpret any them for you, if you have questions.

To volunteer for the Membership Committee, please contact Membership Chair Ray Ramirez at 862-4875. Feel free to suggest new ideas about membership to this number also. However, with many new ideas about membership we need **volunteers** to help implement them, so call soon.

Lincoln Project targets Republican precincts

by Bryan Vezey

In an effort to lessen the influence of the Radical Right in the Republican Party, HGLPC Lincoln Project members are discussing ways to promote more precinct level involvement by gay or gay-friendly moderate Republicans.

In Harris County, more than 700 voting precincts currently lack Republican precinct judges. Many of those precincts are in areas of town, like Montrose and the Heights, that are predominantly Democratic. Considering the important policy-making role played by precinct judges at the district, county, and state levels of the GOP, these vacancies are effectively windows of opportunity for our community.

The Lincoln Project would obviously lack the resources to take on such an enormous project by itself. Accordingly, the Lincoln Project is looking for ways to join forces with other like-minded groups and individuals within the Republican Party. For instance, former Republican congressional candidate Dolly Madison McKenna recently announced the formation of The Liberty Tree, an organization dedicated to educating voters about the importance of precinct level participation. Members of the Liberty Tree are committed to redirecting the Republican Party away from the Radical Right fringe and back toward the mainstream. Also, Log Cabin-Houston has recently formed a Political Affairs Committee focused on the same goal. The Lincoln Project will attempt to work with these groups in order to share resources and avoid duplication of effort.

The next Lincoln Project meeting will be at 7 p.m. on April 26 at Baby Barnaby's, 604 Fairview.

Get deputized at May meeting

Grassroots political activism. Voter registration. Voter education. You will be hearing and seeing these phrases in 1995 in regard to HGLPC's mission to raise the number of voters in our community participating in elections. Each board member has chosen a month to sponsor voter registration in the Montrose and surrounding areas. Already this year we have registered over 250 voters.

It's a simple process. All it takes is a couple of card tables, pens, voter registration cards, and able volunteers, one of whom must be a volunteer *Deputy Registrar*. The deputy oversees the correct completion of the voter registration applications.

At our May 3 meeting we will be deputizing all who want to assist with voter registration. They must reside in Harris County. If you are interested in the voter registration process, attend the May 3 meeting.

You are invited to an. . .

HGLPC Party

Saturday, April 29, 1995

See insert for details!

Events

This Month... This Year

Bill Scott died April 4, 1995, due to complications with AIDS.

Bill was the founder, Clinical Director, and a Board Member of the Montrose Counseling Center; co-founder and past Board Member of the AIDS Foundation Houston; founder and former Board Member of Body Positive; co-founder and Clinical Director of HIPY; Board Member and past President of the National Lesbian and Gay Health Foundation; and a Board Member of the AIDS Equity League.

A devoted public servant, Bill was appointed to Mayor Kathryn Whitmire's Task Force on AIDS in 1986, and in 1991 he was appointed to the Texas Board of Health by Governor Ann Richards.

His many awards include the proclamation of "Bill Scott Day" by Mayor Whitmire in 1985 and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Texas Human Rights Foundation.

Bill will long be remembered as an outspoken and compassionate advocate in the fight against AIDS.

And don't forget about...

Pride Week

Spectrum '95

Juneteenth

Freedom Dance

Annual Dinner

- April 26** Lincoln Project. Baby Barnaby's, 604 Fairview, 7 p.m.
- April 26** OutVote. 2700 Albany Suite 304, 6 p.m.
- April 27** Political Action Working Group. 2700 Albany, 6:30 p.m.
- April 29** HGLPC Party! See insert for details!
- April 29** Voter Registration. Crossroads and Randall's, 12 Noon.
- May 3** HGLPC General Meeting. Bylaw change, voter registration deputizing. 2700 Albany, 7:30 p.m.
- May 4** Gay & Lesbian Vets. 2700 Albany, 7 p.m.
- May 10** HGLPC Board Meeting. 2700 Albany, 7 p.m.
- May 11** Precinct Organization Demo Party. Place and time TBA.
- May 15** Voter Poster Contest Deadline. \$300 Prize!
- May 17** OutVote. 2700 Albany, 7 p.m.
- May 18** Political Action Working Group. 2700 Albany, 6:30 p.m.
- May 25** Political Action Working Group. 2700 Albany, 6:30 p.m.
- May 27** Newsletter Mailing Party. 2700 Albany, 12 noon.
- May 31** Lincoln Project. Baby Barnaby's, 604 Fairview, 7 p.m.

Here are 39 good reasons for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people to vote:

ROBERTA ACHTENBERG
TOM AMMIANO
CAL ANDERSON
TAMMY BALDWIN
HARRY BRITT
KEN CHEUVRON
TOM CHIOLA
KAREN CLARK
TOM DUANE
BONNIE DUMANIS
GEORGE EIGHMEY
WILL FITZPATRICK
BARNEY FRANK
JACKIE GOLDBERG
STEVE GUNDERSON
SHERRY HARRIS
JEFF HORTON
SHELLEY GAYLORD
LESLIE KATZ
CHRISTINE KEHOE
SHEILA KUEHL
SUSAN LEAL
GLEN MAXEY
DALE McCORMICK
CRAIG McDANIEL
CAROLE MIGDEN
MICHAEL NELSON
TOM ROBERTS
TERI SCHWARTZ
MARILYN SHAFER
GAIL SHIBLEY
VICTORIA SIGLER
GERRY STUDDS
WALLY SWAN
TIM VAN ZANDT
JONATHAN WILSON
CYNTHIA WOOTEN
LAWRENCE WONG
ZEKE ZEIDLER

Gay conservatives lobby Lege

by J. Michael Marks

Conservative members of the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus opened new doors in Austin during lobbying efforts for the revision of Texas's hate crimes law. At the Caucus's monthly meeting the positive accounts of conservative lobbying motivated a call for aggressive recruitment of new members regardless of their party affiliation.

The Caucus sent representatives to meet with legislators on April 3 about the crime bill's language, which has been approved by the U. S. Supreme Court. Currently in committee, House Bill 365 relates to the prosecution of and punishment for an offense motivated by bias or prejudice. The language of the bill includes sexual orientation as a punishable motivation.

Historically hostile conservatives were lobbied by representatives from the Lincoln Project, a moderate-to-conservative faction of the Caucus. Bryan Vezey, co-chair of the Lincoln Project, met with state Rep. Warren P. Chisum's administrative assistant Marlene McMichaels. Conservative Democrat Chisum, District 88, Pampa, has attacked legislation favoring gays and lesbians in the past, said Vezey.

"We had a rough meeting with his administrative assistant," Vezey said. "She had been bombarded by gay lobbyists all day and did little to hide her disgust. She even compared homosexuality with bestiality," said Vezey.

"We stressed conservative ideals of order and strong law enforcement. She said that we were the first people that day who made any sense," said Vezey.

In a telephone interview on April 7, McMichaels did not recall meeting Vezey. "I met with a lot of people about the hate crime bill on that day. I don't recall his group," she said. She declined comment on the way Rep. Chisum is likely to vote on the bill.

"I seriously doubt we will have Chisum's support," said Vezey. "If nothing else, we helped neutralize the opposition," he said.

Terri Richardson, president of HGLPC, said Republicans have been turned off by the liberal character of the Caucus in the past. "It's a reputation we need to correct," said liberal Democrat Richardson. "The Caucus has broadened its scope with the inclusion of conservatives. We need to continue to reach out to potential members," Richardson said.

Other items on the agenda carried the call for inclusion and membership recruiting further. Richardson announced the newly formed lesbian and gay voter project, with a plea for participation. "If this is going to take off, we will need a larger membership and a firmer commitment from our existing members," she said. OutVote, as the project is called, is in the process of attaining 501(c)(3) tax exempt status.

The need of volunteers for Pride Week and the Westheimer Art Festival was stressed by Richardson along with a suggestion to include non-members in the planning of social events.

"We aren't short on ideas and we now have a clear sense of direction," said Richardson. "We just need to get in touch with the entire community," she said.