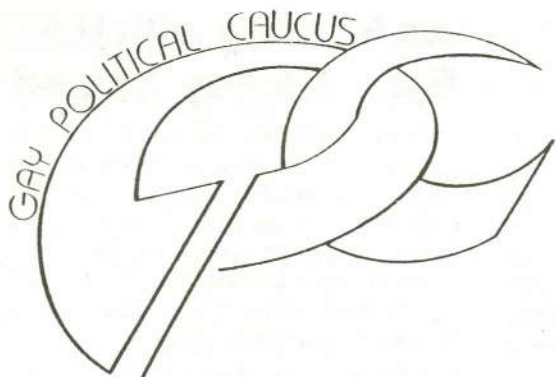




# NEWSLETTER

August, 1979

## Citizens Coalition For A Responsive Government Says No To 9-5 Plan On August 11

Over 40 significant political groups in Houston have joined in coalition to defeat the 9-single member district 5-at large plan which the city has put before the people on August 11th. Included in the coalition are GPC, Harris County Council of Organizations, Montrose Civic Coalition, LULAC, Political Association of Spanish Speaking Organizations, Harris County Democrats, Tax Payers Political Action Committee, Citizens Forum of Clear Lake City, and Alief/Southwest Chamber of Commerce. Al Greene, attorney for the plaintiffs who brought suit against the city to force compliance with the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the U.S. Constitution, spoke to GPC recently and made the following points:

- The constituency of a single city council member under the present at-large plan is greater than that of 16 U.S. governors and 32 U.S. Senators.

- Under the proposed 9-5 plan, a single district would include populations greater than many American cities— including Mobile, Ala., Jackson, Miss., Lubbock, Amarillo, and Beaumont, Tex.

-The issue before us is one of Responsive Government and addresses all Houstonians; it is not simply a minority issue.

The strategy of the coalition is to vote NO on the 9-5 plan on August 11, while obtaining signatures to petition in favor of a 16-4 plan. The Justice Department has precleared the August 11 to occur but must still rule on the 9-5 plan should it pass, to assure compliance with the law. Our petitions become very important because they reflect the will of the people. GPC will be soliciting signatures at neighborhood locations through August 11. This is the single most important election our community has faced; make sure you and your friends are out to vote NO on August 11.

## Gay Pride Week '79 Creates Unity

Without question, the organizers and participants of Gay Pride Week 1979 orchestrated a 10-day series of events which was unmatched anywhere on the national gay scene, and they are to be congratulated. A special note of Thanks goes to Carol Fennema, who coordinated the entire week's events; to

## GPC Meets With McConn On July 23

On Monday, July 23, GPC representatives met with Mayor McConn to discuss a number of issues of importance to the entire gay community. This particular meeting was prompted by the lack of response we've obtained from the city lately. The most recent example of this was the city's failure to include a representative from the gay community on the recently formed Police Advisory Commission. Other issues on the agenda for this meeting included the continuing problem of police abuse, on the streets and in the city jail; the open hostility which Houston's city council has shown towards the gay community; the condition of the streets and lighting in the inner city; the U.S. Civil Rights Commission hearings, and the issue of Single Member Districts.

Larry Bagneris, who coordinated Sunday's parade and fireworks, and to all of the gay bars, businesses, and individuals who offered their time, money, and resources. "Wait 'til next year" is the thought foremost in the minds of many Houstonians.

## National Transportation Plan Adopted For March On Washington

By dialing 1-800-528-7382 you can obtain information around the clock concerning the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights on October 14. This is a toll-free 24-hour number, and the information center has specifically been set up to assist with travel plans to and from the march. Most importantly, it will provide a nationwide network through which efforts in all parts of the country can be coordinated. Coordinators Greg Carmack and Ray Hill are encouraging

people to make their plans early.

Recent discussions with the Dallas Committee indicate they plan to send over 2000 people from Dallas to D.C. They also plan to provide a hospitality suite in D.C. and hope to join other Texans to create a TEXAS DELEGATION, to be rivaled in size only by the East and West Coast delegations. Plans are also underway for Texas "MARCH" T-shirts, and it's been suggested that all participants from Texas carry Texas flags down

Pennsylvania Avenue. After witnessing the results of the 1979 Gay Pride Week parade, Larry Bagneris stated that 2000 Houstonians carrying Texas flags in D.C. on October 14 should be a minimum goal. Plans are underway in Houston to sponsor a fireworks display on the eve of the March, over the reflecting pool by the Washington Monument. For local information concerning the March, please call 523-6969 or 526-2668.

## **"Family" Sets Sept. 30 As Gay Day At Astroworld; \$50,000 Goal Set For D.C. March And Local Election Expenses**

**—From The Montrose Star**

A group of gay business and political leaders, meeting for the second time in a week at the Silver Phoenix and calling themselves "The Family", decided to go ahead and host a "Gay Day" at Astroworld amusement park. The event was set for September 30. Plans include having Montgomery Ward's Top Ticket locations handle ticket sales, as well as promoting sales through gay businesses. Astroworld is willing to sell tickets to "The Family" at a cost of \$5.25 apiece. The group will then sell the tickets to the gay public at \$10 each (approximately the regular Astroworld admission price). The profits, which organizers hope will approach \$50,000 will be used to cover expenses for the National March On Washington and GPC's expenses for the election this fall. The group hopes to make funds available to a number of groups in the city. GPC will submit a budget request to insure responsible usage of the funds.

The Family also agreed to stage a Labor Day Festival on September 2 on Lovett Blvd. All gay clubs and organizations are being encouraged to participate by calling Mike Bancaster: 528-3243 or 529-7525. Plans to hold the festival on Lovett will require approval of property owners in the area, but no problems are expected.

## **GPC Moves To 4600 Main**

With the arrival of hot weather this summer, it became clear that GPC would have to make new arrangements for a more comfortable place in which to meet. This is particularly important to us, now that our active political season is approaching. And so, GPC has moved its offices and meeting place from the M.A.C. to **4600 Main, suite 215**. We are borrowing the meeting room on the second floor, which is air-conditioned, from Harris County Democrats. GPC Meetings are still regularly scheduled on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month, at 7:30 PM. We hope the change to more hospitable quarters will bring our attendance up.

In a letter to the M.A.C. Board recently, GPC made it clear that the move was no indication of our lack of support for the Montrose Activity Center. At

Plans were also discussed to have an entertainment extravaganza at one of the major auditoriums, such as the Music Hall or at Spotts Park. The event would feature a national impersonator, such as Craig Russell, and a good deal of local talent.

The turnout on July 17 was probably the largest group of gay business owners and political leaders ever assembled in the city. No specific date was set for another general meeting, but the bar owners have agreed to meet on July 24th at the Midnite Sun at 2 P.M. to discuss problems related directly to their businesses.

## **Do You Have A Project For GPC?**

GPC has a new system for paying its bills, which provides for the anticipation of future expenses and the documentation of these expenses for review by members and the IRS. In order to obtain funds for payment of expenses, follow these simple steps: (a) complete a "request for payment," in advance, at the GPC office or at meetings; (b) If the amount is over \$100, obtain approval from the board; (c) leave a receipt or invoice to be attached to the request. This will greatly facilitate the handling of funds.

press time, M.A.C. is undertaking a massive clean-up campaign to get the building in shape, and we look forward to a time when the building is in good shape. GPC members and M.A.C. supporters can help in this effort by calling UPFRONT, at 960-1611.

### **GPC OFFICERS**

Steve Shiflett, President  
Larry Bagneris, Vice-president  
Greer Price, Secretary  
Steve Caldwell, Treasurer

### **GPC BOARD MEMBERS**

Norman Guttman  
Chuck Hickman  
Ray Hill  
Bob Lockett  
Karl Reinhardt  
Alice Shrader  
Bob Sklare  
Scott Tillinghast  
Steve Umoff

## **An Evening with U.S. Rep. Mickey Leland**

On Wednesday, August 8, at 7:30 PM, the GPC Education Committee is sponsoring another in the continuing series of Educational Forums. This evening our guest will be U.S. Representative Mickey Leland. The forum will be held at 4600 Main (2nd floor). We encourage you to attend.

## **"Expressions Of Freedom" Draws 5000**

As part of the Gay Pride Week '79 celebration, GPC sponsored Sunday night's rally, "Expressions of Freedom," and drew a crowd of over 5000 with featured guest speakers Midge Costanza, Jean O'Leary, Harry Britt and Kathy Whitmire. All of the speakers offered words of encouragement and hope to the assembled crowd; Kathy Whitmire received a standing ovation for her stand on issues of Human Rights, and Midge Costanza spoke with an enthusiasm and fervor which was matched only by the spectacular fireworks which punctuated her final comments. The National Gay Theatre closed the program with a statement about Gay Pride which was uniquely effective, and the park was immaculately cleaned by Midnight, thanks to the crowd of volunteers who stayed to help. Congratulations and Thanks to the many people who were involved.

### **GPC COORDINATORS**

Tony Bicocchi  
*Voter Registration*  
David Bonuelos  
*Medical Committee*  
Charles Botts  
*Mailing List Coordinator*  
Sam Canzoneri  
*Membership Coordinator*  
Lee Harrington  
*Fund Raising & Budget Planning*  
Chuck Hickman  
*Political Action Committee*  
Lee Nation  
*GPC Photographer*  
Marvin Prevost  
*Assistant Membership Coordinator*  
Darvin Wright  
*Public Relations & Volunteer Coordinator*  
Stan Zimmerman  
*Operation Documentation*

## Texas Gay Conference VI In Austin

Texas Gay Task Force is sponsoring the sixth annual Texas Gay Conference in Austin on August 17-19. This year's conference will feature special guests Leonard Matlovitch and Pat Bond (of **Word Is Out** fame). The conference will begin on Friday evening, August 17 at 8 PM with a cocktail party at the Sheraton-Crest Inn (headquarters for TGC VI). Saturday morning's activities will include a report on this year's lobbying effort in Austin, and most of the rest of the day will be devoted to Workshops on a wide variety of topics. Saturday's dinner and program will begin at 7:30 PM at the Sheraton. The conference is expected to officially adjourn at 12:30 PM on Sunday.

Houstonians are eagerly encouraged to attend. It is a rare opportunity for unity among lesbian & gay Texans, and

## Political Action Committee Report

The Political Action Committee of GPC is currently involved in a massive campaign to insure that the political clout of our community will be greater than ever before. Chuck Hickman, Political Action Coordinator and GPC Board member, recently announced the formation of four committees to achieve this goal.

### (1) Voter Registration Committee

GPC has set a goal of registering an additional 10,000 voters by the first of the year. Volunteer crews will be out in the community registering voters, soliciting signatures for and seeking

GPC has set a goal of registering an additional 10,000 voters by the first of the year. Volunteer crews will be out in the community registering voters, soliciting signatures for a more representative Single Member District plan for city council, and seeking memberships and names for the GPC mailing list. Remember that Gay power is measured in Gay votes. If you aren't registered, do so immediately. Tony Bicocchi is chair and can be reached at 524-4956.

### (2) Precinct Organization Committee

Precincts will be targeted and canvassed beginning on the first weekend of August. A network of precinct coordinators and block captains will lead a door-to-door campaign in key precincts to identify and inform gay voters, to register gays who are not registered to vote, and to get these voters to the polls on election day. A phone tree will also be established, in which a volunteer will be responsible for phoning 20-40 people from the GPC mailing list. Each of

an excellent time to get to know the people who represent us in Austin. Houston's Gay Political Caucus will be sponsoring a hospitality suite at the Sheraton-Crest throughout the weekend. Advance registration for TGC VI is \$20 and includes Friday night's party and Saturday's dinner (registration at the door: \$25). Recently, GPC members discussed their own personal goals for the conference and it was decided that this would be a perfect opportunity 1) to develop cameraderie with some of the other grass roots organizations, 2) for members to exchange ideas on how the various committees in the other groups operate, and 3) to make the March On Washington a rallying point under which all lesbian and gay Texans can unite.

these 20 people in turn will telephone 20 people, and this will continue, enabling GPC to activate the entire 8000-person mailing list in a 24 to 36-hour period should an emergency arise. To volunteer, call 526-2668.

### (3) Municipal Elections Committee of Houston (MECH)

The MECH is raising money with the help of FAMILY, INC., an ad hoc community-organized group. The money will be allocated for contributions to candidates which GPC endorses. If our goal of raising \$10,000 for this year's Municipal Elections is realized, the political and economic clout of our community will be greatly enhanced. A GPC endorsement will mean votes, volunteers, and money: the means by which candidates supportive of gay rights can be elected and then held accountable to our community. GPC needs these donations to promote candidates who support us. If you can send a contribution, please make checks available to Municipal Elections Committee of Houston, P.O. Box 61587, Houston 77028.

### (4) Screening and Questionnaire Committee

The screening committee seeks input to develop a comprehensive questionnaire to include Gay, Lesbian and Minority issues, to be used in screening candidates who seek GPC endorsement. If you have questions or concerns you'd like included, send them to GPC in the next two weeks, c/o GPC Screening Committee, P.O. Box 61587, Houston 77208

## Medical Committee Report

First and foremost, we are pleased to announce that "Mother Ruth" Ravas has come to her senses at last and will be staying with the Houston health department to work with the gay community in Houston.

We had a wonderful turnout at Dirty Sally's for the clinic during the recent delegates dinner (National March conference, July 6-8). Many thanks to the management for their help on such short notice.

The bar and bath owners are all due a loud round of applause for their continued assistance in the V.D. testing program. Next time you're in, take a minute to thank them.

We are currently nearing the midway point in the Herpes/Hepatitis study that GPC and the gay community are coordinating with the Baylor College of Medicine. Cooperation and response has been terrific. Feedback we're getting from the straight people involved in the project indicates that we as the gay community have their well-deserved admiration and respect. If you have not yet participated in the study, we urge you to do so. The next testing session will be at the August 1st GPC meeting. Results (which are confidential) may be obtained by calling 790-4446, or you may obtain them from Dr. Adam at the next meeting. You must have your slip with you at that time if you want your results.

Progress report on the Montrose Free VD Clinic: we are currently contacting other such clinics around the country to survey their structure and financial set-up. Anyone with information on this should contact David Bonuelos at 777-2287. We will be running a notice in the next issue of the **Advocate**. Anyone interested—please see David Bonuelos at the next meeting.

## Photos of Gay Pride Week 1979 Available

Over 2000 color slides were taken through Gay Pride Week this year, thanks to the efforts of GPC Photographer Lee Nation. They were on display recently at the general caucus meeting, and they will be on display at future meetings. Copies are available at a nominal cost from Lee. In addition, GPC is planning a fund-raising event in the near future entitled GAY PRIDE IN REVIEW, which will feature films and slides from 1978 and 79 Gay Pride Week celebrations. Details of this event will be available shortly.

# Calendar Of Events / Summer-Fall 1979

## August

- 1 GPC Meeting, 7:30 p.m., 4600 Main.
- 2 Mailing list work session, 7:30 p.m., 3402 Garrott #14.
- 3 Voter Registration, NUMBERS, 9:30 p.m.
- 4 Voter Registration, NUMBERS, 9:30 p.m.
- 5 Photo Exhibit on Gay Pride Week 1979 opens at Wilde 'N Stein.
- 6 Gay Rights Coordinating Council Meets, 7:30 p.m. at M.A.C.
- 7 Gay Pride Week 1980—first organizational meeting, M.A.C., 7:30 p.m.
- 8 **An Evening With Mickey Leland:** GPC Educational Forum, 7:30 p.m. at 4600 Main.
- 9 Mailing list work session, 7:30 p.m., 3402 Garrott #14.
- 11 **City Election RE:** Single Member Districts (Vote NO on 9-5).
- 15 GPC Meeting, 7:30 p.m., 4600 Main.
- 17- Texas Gay Conference VI in Austin, Texas (sponsored by TGTF).
- 21 Political Action Committee meeting.
- 26 GPC Party - 11111 Cliffwood - In appreciation for all the help we received during Gay Pride Week 1979.
- 30 Potluck at 3405 Mulberry, 7:30 p.m., in appreciation to all the Gay Pride Week 1979 staff. Sponsored by **Integrity/Houston**.
- 31 Fund-raiser at NUMBERS for the March on Washington, 9 p.m.

## HPD Says Parade Conduct Troublesome

A recent note of thanks offered by GPC to Deputy Chief Bankston of the HPD for their assistance during the GPW parade was answered by a note from Chief Bankston which included the following remarks:

"...I take issue with your feeling that this was a smooth, orderly and well-controlled event. Our officers experienced a great deal of difficulty because there was a lack of control over the parade participants by anyone from your group, the parade was late getting started and stopped a great many times, thereby creating immense traffic problems for Houston motorists. Perhaps future events scheduled by the Houston gay community can be better planned, coordinated and controlled by the event's sponsors and will, therefore, create less problems for the Police Dept."

Larry Bagneris clarified these questions with the following comments: (1) The parade started precisely at 3 p.m., which was the starting time agreed upon by the HPD; (2) Under the circumstances, crowd control was remarkably well coordinated. A crowd of 20,000 people celebrated the day's events without a single incident, particularly remarkable in view of the fact that the HPD provided only eight

## September

- 2 Gay Street Festival tentatively scheduled on Lovett Blvd.
- 4 Political Action Committee Meeting.
- 5 GPC Meeting, 7:30 p.m., 4600 Main.
- 10 U.S. Civil Rights Commission Open Hearings, Univ. of Houston.
- 12 GPC Board Meeting.
- 16 Political Action Committee Meeting.
- 19 GPC Meeting, 7:30 p.m., 4600 Main; GPC Candidate endorsements due.
- 20 Political Action Committee meeting.
- 30 Gay Day at ASTROWORLD.

## October

- 3 GPC Meeting, 7:30 p.m., 4600 Main.
- 7 GPC **Meet The Candidates** Party.
- 10 GPC Board Meeting.
- 14 **National March on Washington for Lesbian And Gay Rights.**
- 26 Campaign begins for municipal elections.

## November

- 6 **ELECTION DAY.**

## Fund Raising and Budget Planning Committee Underway

The fund raising and Budget Planning Committee has begun work on developing a long range budget for GPC. Presently involved in the committee are Steve Caldwell, Lee Harrington, and Craig Litton. This work is particularly important, as it will enable us to solicit funds with realistic goals in mind. If you are interested in helping with this, please see Lee Harrington at the next meeting, or call him at 523-4400.

## GPC T-Shirts \$6.00 Wilde 'N Stein Bookshop 520 B Westheimer

police officers. (3) Traffic problems on Westheimer (which was officially closed for the event) on the day of the parade were considerably less than those incurred annually at the Westheimer Art Festival, an event for which the city has repeatedly refused to close off Westheimer. It was clear to everyone involved that problems with the parade on July 1 were minimal, and Chief Bankston's letter only served to shed an unfortunate—and inaccurate—light on the event. At a meeting between the Mayor and officers of GPC on July 23, this issue was discussed at some length. Mayor McConn agreed to investigate and act upon Chief Bankston's caustic letter.

Your remarks concerning the above may be directed to the Mayor, P.O. Box 1562, 77001, or to Deputy Chief Bankston at 61 Riesner Street, 77001.

## How is My Contribution to GPC Handled?

Your appreciated donations and membership fees are deposited directly to the GPC corporate account at First International Bank. Look for the GPC endorsement on your check which ensures that it was properly deposited. All monies are expended for approved purposes in accordance with the procedure outlined elsewhere in this newsletter. GPC's fiscal year ends August 31st and a financial statement will be issued in September.

The caucus recently delegated to the GPC board the responsibility of consulting tax attorneys regarding the formal establishment of a Municipal Elections Committee of Houston, a political action committee whose purpose would be to handle donations to candidates. The board has also been asked to investigate the possibility of establishing a tax deductible Educational Foundation, something which has been under discussion for over a year. The tax committee will report on this at the next meeting.

## Statement of Income And Expenses

"Expressions Of Freedom"

Gay Political Caucus

July 9, 1979

### INCOME:

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Food and Beverage Concessions  | \$2604     |
| Fireworks Sponsorships         | 2500       |
| Speaker's Sponsorships         | 1551       |
| Major Contributor              | 800        |
| Audience Contributions         | 709        |
| T-shirt and Photographic Sales | 102        |
| Button Sales                   | 50         |
| Political Contributions        | 47         |
| Memberships                    | 22         |
|                                | <hr/> 8385 |

### EXPENSES:

|                                                     |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Fireworks                                           | \$2500     |
| Speaker's Fee                                       | 2000       |
| Cost of Food and Beverage                           | 928        |
| Advertising                                         | 610        |
| Stage, other structures and facilities <sup>1</sup> | 384        |
| Security                                            | 306        |
| Cost of T-shirts and Photographs sold <sup>2</sup>  | 66         |
| Miscellaneous                                       | 32         |
|                                                     | <hr/> 6826 |

### Excess of Income over Expenses

**\$1559**

<sup>1</sup>Excludes the cost of the parade float

<sup>2</sup>Unsold T-shirts and photographs are included with balance sheet assets as inventory (not shown here)