

Texas

GPWT

NEWSLETTER

77977

GREETINGS !

You're holding Volume 1, Number 1 of the Newsletter of GAY PEOPLE OF WEST TEXAS. Surprised ? So you were not aware of US ? We're here in Lubbock with the purpose of reaching out into all of West Texas, communicating with OUR people, keeping them informed of issues which will affect their lifestyle, and providing hope and encouragement for those who might have previously believed themselves --- ALONE.

We are a group of gay and sympathetic women and men who have organized GAY PEOPLE OF WEST TEXAS for the purpose of security, comfort, and fellowship received through scheduled meetings each month. It is our purpose to strive for equality for gay people, to promote acceptance of our lifestyle within the community, and to seek a change in social attitude that will allow us to be treated with dignity and respect. We believe it is not a question of our sexuality, but rather, a question of our Human Dignity ! We believe we deserve to be treated no better than any other citizen. Yet, we firmly contend that we deserve to be extended the same human rights, respect, and civil liberties that the majority of society denies us.

We are not idle on the cottoned-plains of West Texas, for we have devoted ourselves to six progressive areas of work, which we believe will promote the interests of gay people throughout this section of the state.

We all have known how it is to feel alone and unwanted in society, how we have wished for another gay person with whom we could talk and find support; therefore, we are proud to announce that a GAY HOTLINE is now in operation in our city. Through the efforts and generosity of many dedicated people and their vision of helping reach YOU during some personal crisis, the HOTLINE/DIGNITY number to call is:

795-7825

Local, state, and national legislation can have a

profound effect upon the gay lifestyle. Realizing the need to keep you informed, an ALERT committee has been established to watch the news media for important changes within the political arena that could deprive us of our human rights. It is our purpose to keep you informed of anti-gay legislation and offer suggestions in regard to what you can do in return to protect your civil liberties.

A Communications committee has been formed to publish a newsletter each month, circulating news of social, political, and religious interest. The committee desires articles be submitted by any reader for future publication. By mail, articles should be sent to:

Bob, Chairman, Communications
GAY PEOPLE OF WEST TEXAS
P. O. BOX 16917
Lubbock, Texas 79490

Before we can hope to achieve acceptance by the society in which we live, we must educate the public. The Outreach committee functions for GAY PEOPLE OF WEST TEXAS by speaking before special interest groups, such as the sexuality class at Reese Air Force Base and the Human Development Center. Through the efforts of this committee we are endeavoring to overcome the social paranoia and bigotry harbored against gay people by an uneducated, ill-informed society.

A Program and Social committee exists to sponsor social events such as volleyball, picnics, trips, etc., and to adopt topics of interest for the scheduled meetings of the organization.

Finally, we have a Finance committee which seeks personal or business contributions to help fund the various functions of the organization. Contributions are encouraged and welcomed. Won't you give gaily for gays ?

ALERT REPORT

Several legislative issues currently affect gay men and women in our area. Certainly the federal Legal Services Bill (HR 6666) is the most disturbing because of its McDonald amendment. Rep. McDonald (Dem., Georgia) has proposed to ban the use of federal funds for legal suits on behalf of low-income gays' rights. The House passed the bill; only Texas Reps. Jordan, Eckhardt, and Jim Maddox voted for our rights, joining 130 others who put their names on the line for us.

The bill now goes to the U. S. Senate where it will come up after the August recess. That gives everyone time to write letters of support and gratitude to our three advocates and to contact Senators Tower and Bentsen urging their support:

The Honorable Barbara Jordan, Bill Eckhardt, and Jim Maddox
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator John Tower and Lloyd Bentsen
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Lubbock's George Mahon was one of those voting against our rights; feel free to write him of your disappointment on his vote. Senator Tower will be up for re-election in 1978. Let him know you will vote for and work for any opponent of his who supports minority rights legislation.

GAY HOUSING VOTE

August 7th is an important day for Austin, Texas. The city council voted on adding protection in the area of housing to previous ordinances that protect gay rights in employment and public accommodations. At last report, the probable vote was 3 for, 3 against, with one undecided vote.

DRAG QUEENS: BEWARE

The unlamented recent session of the Texas Legislature left behind several demonstrations of homophobia! One bill was passed, banning gay groups from state campuses. A bill to bar same-sex dancing and cross-dressing died in committee because the session ended before it could be approved and sent to the House. Gay People of West Texas, Texas Gay Task Force, and other gay groups across Texas actively lobbied against these bills.

SALINAS VOTES FOR GAYS

Representative Froy Salinas of Lubbock voted against the anti-gay bill, not because he was aware of the existence of any gay constituents or their feelings, but because the bill seemed opposed to minority rights. He too, deserves our gratitude and quiet support now and in 1978.

GAYS ORGANIZE IN WEST TEXAS

Members of GPWT took a trip to San Angelo for a workshop in the Ramada Inn's Conquistador Room July 16th. A number of gay women and men from San Angelo are interested in forming an organization. Workshop materials distributed to them at the meeting can still be obtained at the Olde Fantastique Bookstore in San Angelo.

Midland-Odessa also has people interested in a social and informational supplement to the bar scene. Interested Permian Basin residents might contact GPWT, Lubbock to obtain more information.

POLICE HARRASSMENT AT AMARILLO

In the Amarillo area, reports of police harrassment at the Old Plantation indicate the need for gay solidarity in the Panhandle. While the I.D. checks, etc., have caused many people concern about selective, oppressive enforcement of the law, others reporting the problem have stressed the need for consciousness-raising among area gay people.

Oppressive laws must be repealed, public attitudes must change, but the behavior said to go on outside the bar and in the nearby park after hours would easily stimulate "harrassment" of straight couples !!!

Jim, Chairman, ALERT Committee

National Ga Leadership Conference

The national gay movement took one giant step forward with the National Gay Leadership Conference in Denver on July 29-30. Delegates from every gay group across America were invited to attend the conference which was sponsored by the nation's four largest gay organizations: UFMCC (Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches), NGTF (National Gay Task Force), GRNL (Gay Rights National Lobby), and Dignity International.

Over 400 delegates attended the Denver meeting to exchange information and provide a positive direction for the energy caused by Anita Bryant and the Dade County Referendum. The theme of the conference, " WE ARE YOUR CHILDREN ", was echoed in keynote speeches by Rev. Troy D. Perry, UFMCC; Ginny Apuzzo, Co-Chairperson, GRNL; and Jean O'Leary, National Co-Director, NGTF.

Jack Campbell, owner of the Club Baths and Treasurer of the Dade County Coalition for Human Rights, introduced a panel discussion, " Dade County -- Lessons Learned ". Friday's activities were capped by a " No-Host Cocktail Party " for all the delegates.

Saturday began with a presentation by Los Angeles Attorney Ray Hartman, Co-Chairman of GRNL, on " A Plan to Guide Gay Rights Legislation Through Congress ". Dr. Bruce Voeller and Jean O'Leary of NGTF discussed their efforts to gain action from the federal government -- " What We Can Expect from the Carter Administration and the Executive Branch " !

Following lunch, Fr. Tom Oddo of Dignity, Boston, was joined by Rev. Elder Freda Smith of UFMCC, Sacramento, and Dr. Ralph Blair, Evangelicals Concerned, New York, in a discussion titled: " Dealing with Religious Issues In the Civil Rights Struggle ".

" How to Lobby Your State and Local Government " was the topic presented by Adam DeBaugh, Lobbyist, Washington; Attorneys Al Smithson of California and Mort Schwab of Houston; as well as Bill Carey of Los Angeles. " MEDIA -- and the Issues " was moderated by Joe Richards of the Advocate.

Following the dinner break, State Representative Elaine Noble of Boston closed the Conference with a rousing speech which brought the delegates to their feet several times.

Rep. Noble will speak at a National Organization for Women event in San Antonio the weekend of Sept. 30- Oct. 2. Several members of the Texas delegation -- Lubbock, Dallas, and San Antonio, are making inquiries into a possible future visit by Elaine Noble on behalf of the Texas Gay Task Force.

Doug, Assistant Director, GPWT

Elaine Noble to Speak

Massachusetts State Representative Elaine Noble

will speak

6:30

Friday, September 30th at

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

2701 Regan

Dallas, Texas

Admission: 1.00

Dignity

Dignity/West Texas is an organization primarily constituted of Catholics and those others interested in furthering the understanding between the gay community and the community at large and fostering at the same time, some kind of religious commitment. We are a chapter of Dignity/International, and, as a result, we share their basic goals.

The purpose of this article is not to reiterate already stated purposes of Dignity/International but to delineate for those who may have access, the activity and purpose of Dignity/West Texas.

Because Dignity/West Texas is such a young chapter it is still in the process of discovering itself and its potential. There are many things to be discovered about ourselves and our place in the Church. Our chapter needs to be discovered by those who could use the services that, hopefully, we will be able to offer in the way of fellowship, counseling and religious activities. Individual members of Dignity need to and are in the process of discovering each other. Hopefully within the very near future the Church will discover Her sons and daughters of Dignity.

We feel that the Church should be made aware of the existence of Dignity/West Texas and also of the needs of the gay people... not only gay Catholics but all gay people.

The Catholic Church, and especially the Catholic Church of the Southwest, has the reputation of fighting for the rights of minorities. Since there is no minority with a history of abuse and discrimination greater than that suffered by the gay community, it would behoove the Church to become aware of Her gay sons and daughters. And, as the Mother, She is to gather Her's to Herself.

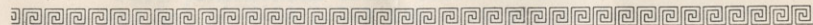
The activities we have planned for the immediate future include social activities and religious services for the gay community, including Mass for Gay People. The Mass will be open to all gay people and everyone is invited to participate to the degree that they wish at these services.

As time goes on and we become more organized we plan

to offer a gay retreat here in Lubbock for those who wish to renew or begin a life which includes spirituality. There is a gay spirituality --- a valid spirituality for those who wish it. This retreat, however, will be developed later as there are many needs we are now trying to meet.

Dignity/West Texas will try to keep the community informed on Catholic Religious Activities as they pertain to the gay lifestyle.

Fax Domini sit semper vobiscum.



REACHING OUT

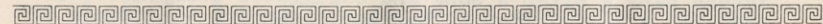
The Outreach Committee needs volunteers to speak before church, school, university, and civic organizations. Also, notify the Outreach Committee if you know of an organization interested in a gay speaker for some future meeting.

If YOU can help, PLEASE contact: Bud, Chairman, Outreach Committee, c/o GPWT.

"GROWTH"

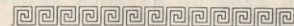
Man's mind stretched to a new idea never goes back to its original dimensions.

Oliver W. Holmes.



CARLSBAD CAVERNS

Interest seems to be growing in regard to a trip to Carlsbad Caverns National Park. If YOU would like to go, please contact Hector, Chairman, Program and Social committee and tell him your wishes regarding such a trip.



NAME OUR PAPER

The Newsletter of GPWT is at last a reality, but we need a name for our paper! Your editor will accept written suggestions submitted to GPWT, P.O. Box 16917, Lubbock, Texas 79490. All entries MUST be written and SIGNED with a return address. All entries will be kept strictly confidential! A prize will be awarded to the winner. Let's hear YOUR suggestions, Gang!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY EXTRAVAGANZA

Sunday, September the 18th was the 3rd anniversary of DAVID'S WAREHOUSE. Such an event could not go unnoticed, so gay people from all over West Texas came to celebrate the bar's anniversary and wish their very best for the man responsible for David's Warehouse. The bar celebrated the event with a performance by the seven hottest ladies in West Texas. If you think the Warehouse is smoky on a Saturday night, it was an inferno when Kerry danced to "Star Wars" twirling two flaming batons! He really sizzled the audience's attention. Miss Tisha Tanner did an excellent job hosting the event, between telling us about some fortunate dude she called, Omar. Tisha proved one thing. Omar has found someone with a lot of talent. Tish said she just wished he had a lot!!!

Sleek as a serpent and more sultry than a sultan, Yvonne sang a siren's song and captivated everyone. Hot is too cool a description of her performance! And Jamie!, Wow! What words can accurately convey the way She looked, sang, or danced? Only three: Beautiful, Beautiful, and still more Beautiful.

Lady Ziva! What can I say? Perhaps, "Here, Kitty.", because she was some Hot Cat! Your editor felt she should be showered with Litter Green, but the audience showered her with their cheers, whistles, and applause. Ziva knows she can sing on my back fence anytime. Ain't that right, Miss Kitty?

And, how 'bout Sussie? Dressed as a slick dude, she

tickled our hearts the way she won the hearts of the two chicks she courted on stage. When we speak of hearts, let's not forget her's. It's filled with love for everybody and everybody loves her.

Shocked! Electrified! Stunned! That's what the audience was when Ieshia finished a number. I thought I was finished when I first saw her. And, before she was even half-way through "I'm Catching Hell", I knew I'd had it! Woopee!

Natalie Simms!

Pure pandemonium broke loose when Natalie turned loose and Let Go! I never heard such a racket in all my life --- or saw such a performance! One thing's for sure. That lady hasn't forgotten the Alamo. And certainly no one privileged to see her perform can forget the display of talent and dedication she put into the Anniversary Extravaganza.

GAY PEOPLE OF WEST TEXAS chose your editor as the official representative to judge the contestants who performed in the anniversary show. I asked four others to assist me in what without a doubt was a very difficult task --- deciding on a winner. I wish to express my thanks and appreciation to those who aided me in selecting a winner for the \$25.00 prize money awarded by GAY PEOPLE OF WEST TEXAS. The result? The judges couldn't decide and came up with a tie between Natalie Simms and Ieshia. Yet, we had a very happy ending when David's Warehouse matched the prize money and Both performers won \$25.00. There were NO losers --- not really, for we all met to have fun and enjoy ourselves at David's Warehouse, and we did, and when this can be done and happiness can be found --- no one loses.

Let me say, "Thank You" to that very special man who provides us with David's Warehouse, where we can all go and meet and have fun and be real Winners.

Until next time, I wish you the best and hope to see you at GPWT.

Bob, Chairman, Communications, GPWT.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sept. 24th.

There will be a Volleyball Tournament at Cherryhurst Park in Houston, Texas at 1:00 P.M. A BEER BUST will follow the tournament at 8:00 P.M.

Oct. 2nd.

A constitutional committee meeting of DIGNITY will be held in the home of David P. at 5:00 P.M. For information please call: 763-3857

Oct. 6th.

DIGNITY meeting at 8:00 P.M. at Pius X rectory, Nassau Road, O'Donnell, Texas. Bring a Pot Luck dish.

Oct. 9th.

GPWT Meeting. Volleyball at 5:00 P.M. at Mahon Park, with meeting following at 7:00 P.M.

Oct 16th.

DIGNITY. Mass and meeting at 5:00 P.M. at Christ the King Meeting Hall. Bring a Pot Luck dish.

Oct. 23rd

GPWT Meeting. Volleyball at 5:00 P.M. at Mahon Park, with Program: Legal Services. Bring a Pot Luck dish.

Oct. 30th.

DIGNITY. Discussion group, " Another Kind of Love " at 5:00 P.M. at Christ the King Meeting Hall. Bring a dish.

Nov. 6th.

GPWT Meeting. Volleyball at 5:00 P.M. at Mahon Park, with following Program: West Texas Regional Coordinators for Texas Gay Task Force.

Nov. 13th.

There will be an Early Thanksgiving Day Mass at Sacred Heart Church, Littlefield, Texas at 5:00 P.M. Bring a Pot Luck dish.

ROCKY JOHN WHITENER

January 24, 1957

August 28, 1977

GPWT
P.O. Box 16917
Lubbock, Texas
79490