Our Own COMMUNITY PRESS

Unitarian-Universalist Gay Community
Unitarian Church
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For information and help call 625-1130

GRANBY MALL CLEANUP AFFECTS GAYS

According to published reports in Norfolk's Virginian-Pilot, as well as information provided by reliable sources, Norfolk police began in late October a campaign to enforce sections of the Alcoholic Beverage Control laws which prohibit the serving of alcohol to homosexuals.

These laws enable the ABC Board to revoke an establsihment's license if such establishment has "become the meeting-place or rendezvous for users of narcotics, drunks, homosexuals, prostitutes, pimps, panderers, gamblers, or habitual law violators." The law also forbids a licensee to employ "any person who has the general reputation as a prostitute, homosexual, panderer, gambler, habitual law violator, person of ill repute, user of or peddler of narcotics or person who drinks to excess or any 'B'-girl."

It is believed that police intimidation of bar owners and their staffs was begun as part of a general effort to rid the Granby Mall area of downtown Norfolk of persons considered to be undesirable by the police and by certain downtown merchants. Our Own has learned that at least one downtown gay bar employee was told by police to keep out all homosexuals and prostitutes. Another downtown establishment has recently posted a sign near its entrance warning female impersonators to stay out. Owners of the Oar House (which is not a downtown bar) had been told recently by police not to serve in the future two individuals who had admitted during interrogation that they were gay. Rumors had circulated that the police had compiled a list of 30 or more names of persons who should not be served alcoholic beverages.

Gays Visit Police Officials

On November 2, members of three Norfolk organizations visited the Norfolk Police Department headquarters to complain about police actions directed at Norfolk's gay bars. Jayr Ellis of the Old Dominion University Gay Alliance, Daniel Gary, member of the Norfolk Coalition of Human Rights and Jim Early, of the Unitarian Universalist Gay Community, met for almost two hours with Norfolk's Deputy Chief of Operations, John L.Andrews, and Lt. Shelton P. Griffin, Assistant to the Chief.

Andrews denied that the police had circulated a list of names (of persons who should not be served beverages) and denied that police officers were verbally furnishing names to bar owners. He did acknowledge that in a recent meeting with Downtown Norfolk Association merchants, police had discussed the "he-she" problem in the Granby Mall area. "He-she" is the police term used to identify male prostitutes who dress as women. At one point Andrews told one of the gay men, "you ought to go out there on the Mall after dark. Those 'he-she's' will even stop traffic to make their propositions." When asked if anyone from City Council had applied prssure to enforce the ABC laws, Andrews said there had not been any such pressure.

Much of the discussion centered on the police definition of a homosexual and its use in enforcing the ABC laws. Andrews said that for a gay person to be prohibited from drinking, he or she must be a "known homosexual", or one who has been convicted of a crime involving a prohibited sexual act with someone of the same sex. Although a known homosexual must be a person who has had a prior arrest and conviction, the police, Andrews said, cannot inform the owners or anyone else of such convictions, because doing so would violate Virginia's Freedom of Information Act. The police use the term "known homosexual" when they wish to communicate the supposedly proscribed information.

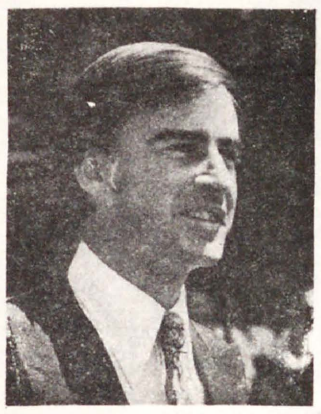
When asked if a conviction on a charge of soliciting someone of the same sex would cause the offender to be classed as a "known homosexual", Andrews said that, in his view, it would not. He also said that he did not believe one could become a "known homosexual" merely by telling the police what his or her sexual orientaion was. He did add, however, that he would try to get the Commonwealth Attorney's opinion on this.

Jayr Ellis pointed out that, according to the police definition, there were very few "known homosexuals" in this area, but that policepersons on patrol were not making this important distinction between "known homosexuals" and homosexuals who had not been convicted.

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Brown Attends DC Gay Rally

by Jim Early



In a speech punctuated by sustained bursts of cheers and applause, California's Governor Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown told the mostly gay audience at Washington's gay disco, The Pier, that he intends to put gay rights to the forefront of debated issues in the 1980 Presidential campaign. About 600 persons had paid $10 each to attend the November 27 fundraiser to promote the inclusion of a gay rights plank in the platform of both national political parties and to elect gay delegates to their conventions next summer.

Brown promised to be the "driving force" in getting other candidates to debate the gay rights issue, and he pledged to work actively for a gay rights plank in his party's platform. If elected President, Brown promised to sign an executive order which would ban discrimination against homosexuals in the federal government. (As Governor of California Brown has issued such an order extending protections to state employees, and he has recently appointed a gay man, Stephen Lachs, to the Los Angeles Superior Court).

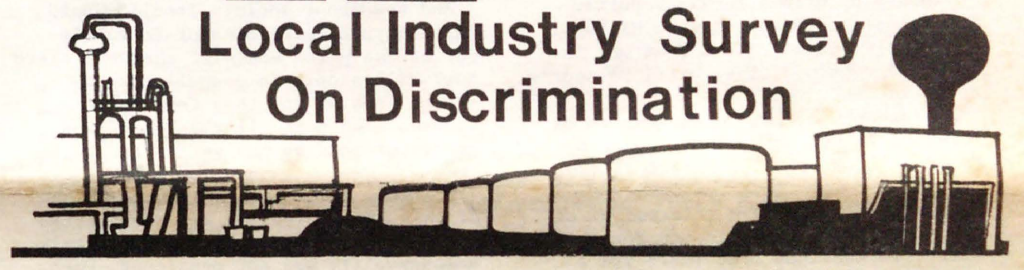
The Governor told the enthusiastic audience, "We must reach into our hearts and minds and support all of those who do not enjoy the full rights and privileges of our society." He called the present period a "time of transition" which will precede fundamental changes in American society.

Among other issues of concern to Americans, Brown singled out the feminist movement and reiterated his

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We Need Your Help

Our Own To Conduct Local Industry Survey On Discrimination



In the next few weeks OUR OWN will be surveying local businesses to ascertain if they have an existing policy forbidding discrimination based on sexual orientation, or whether they would adopt one. The survey will be in the form of a letter and questionnaire and will be sent to the largest local firms, banks, hospitals etc. In this regard we are requesting the help of the readers. If you would like your place of employment surveyed, please mail us the complete name of the business, its address, and who in particular should receive the request. We feel that the letter is more likely to get the proper attention if directed personally to someone in a position to reply for the firm, such as a president, director of administration, or a similar position. Your name, of course, will not be mentioned in the survey to the firm.

This survey is patterned after a corporate survey conducted by the National Gay Task Force (NGTF) in 1978 in which the "Fortune 500" companies were contacted. NGTF received more than 125 responses from corporations stating that they do not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation in hiring or promotions. The favorable replies were from such corporate giants as AT&T, DuPont, Exxon, Firestone, Ford, General Motors, IBM and Xerox.

NGTF has already provided Our Own with advice concerning our survey, along with sample letters to the corporations and examples of the replies. In NGTF's letter, for example, part of the request was stated, "It is generally estimated that about ten per cent of the national work-force is homosexual. These women and men, like other workers and professionals, share the common concern that their jobs not be limited or lost because of their off-the-job views or activities. Consequently, we are surveying the leading American corporations to ascertain if they have an existing policy forbidding discrimination based on sexual orientation." Our Own also has information, including a questionnaire, provided by the Gay Alliance of Genesee Valley (Rochester, N.Y.). That group conducted a local industry survey in 1978 and received good responses from local firms, including Eastman Kodak and Xerox, which together employ over 60,000 in Rochester.

When final returns of the survey are in, Our Own will publicize the results, and also follow up on those firms which failed to reply or which did not enunciate a clear fair-employment policy with regard to sexual orientation. It is stressed again that information from the readers on who they want surveyed will help improve the success and scope of the project. (Donations to help defray our printing and mailing costs will also, of course, be appreciated.) Send the information on your place of employment to Our Own (Industry Survey), 739 Yarmouth Street, Norfolk, VA 23510.

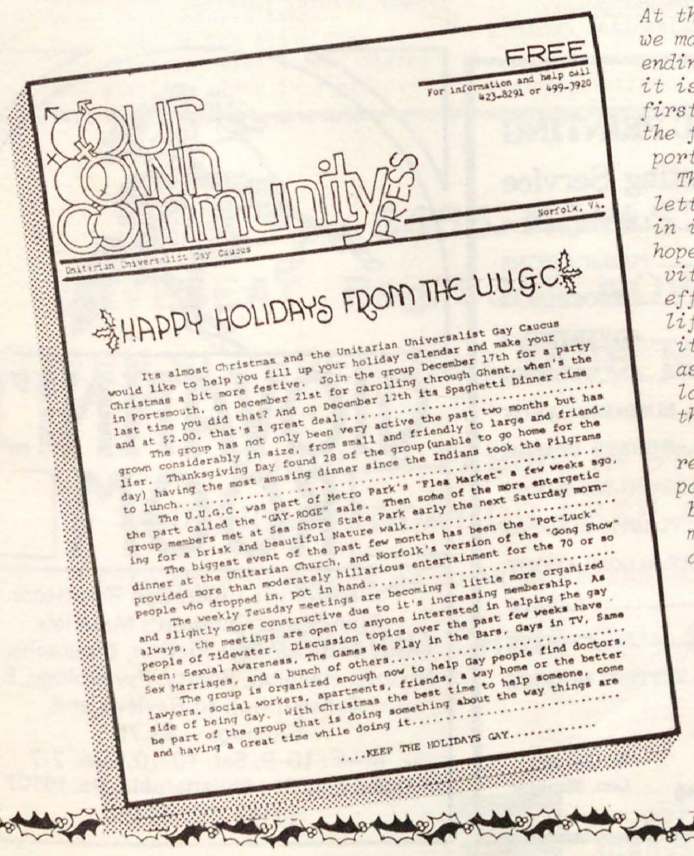
Va. Supreme Court To Hear Lesbian Case

Last March a Franklin County (VA) Circuit Court judge ordered a cancellation of a lesbian's visitation rights regarding her 9-year old son. As part of that ruling Judge B.A. Davis allowed the woman's former husband and his wife to adopt the boy. The cancellation of visitation rights was ordered because Davis thought, according to an Associated Press report, that "the mother's relationship with another woman would have a harmful emotional effect on her son."

The Virginia Supreme Court issued an order on November 20 stating that it would agree to hear an appeal challenging the ruling of Judge Davis. This action on the part of the state court is significant because it was needed to enable a continuation of the legal fight to restore the woman's visitation rights.

The American Civil Liberties Union is pursuing the case on behalf of the mother and contends "that the boy is well adjusted and would not be hurt from being exposed to his mother's lifestyle." The woman is now living in Ohio with a woman mail carrier; her son, his father and stepmother have recently moved from Virginia to South Carolina.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE U.U.G.C.



FREE

For information and help call 423-8291 or 499-3920

Our Own Community Press

Unitarian Universalist Gay Caucus

Norfolk, Va.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE U.U.G.C.

Its almost Christmas and the Unitarian Universalist Gay Caucus would like to help you fill up your holiday calendar and make your Christmas a bit more festive. Join the group December 17th for a party in Portsmouth, on December 21st for carolling through Ghent, when's the last time you did that? And on December 12th its Spaghetti Dinner time and at $2.00, that's a great deal.....

The group has not only been very active the past two months but has grown considerably in size, from small and friendly to large and friendlier. Thanksgiving Day found 28 of the group(unable to go home for the day) having the most amusing dinner since the Indians took the Pilgrams to lunch.....

The U.U.G.C. was part of Metro Park's "Flea Market" a few weeks ago, the part called the "GAY-ROGE" sale. Then some of the more entergetic group members met at Sea Shore State Park early the next Saturday morning for a brisk and beautiful Nature walk.....

The biggest event of the past few months has been the "Pot-Luck" dinner at the Unitarian Church, and Norfolk's version of the "Gong Show" provided more than moderately hillarious entertainment for the 70 or so people who dropped in, pot in hand.....

The weekly Tesusday meetings are becoming a little more organized and slightly more constructive due to it's increasing membership. As always, the meetings are open to anyone interested in helping the gay people of Tidewater. Discussion topics over the past few weeks have been: Sexual Awareness, The Games We Play in the Bars, Gays in TV, Same Sex Marriages, and a bunch of others.....

The group is organized enough now to help Gay people find doctors, lawyers, social workers, apartments, friends, a way home or the better side of being Gay. With Christmas the best time to help someone, come be part of the group that is doing something about the way things are and having a Great time while doing it.....

....KEEP THE HOLIDAYS GAY.....

At this time of year when we mark our calendar with endings and new beginnings, it is good to recall that first Christmas shared by the founders and early supporters of our UUGC.

The 1976 Christmas Newsletter is reproduced here in its entirety, and we hope that its closing invitation to come join the effort to build a better life and a better community remains outstanding as long as injustice and loneliness are part of the human condition.

We thank all of our readers for their support and wish only the best for the gay community through the holidays and in 1980.



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