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Courage getting ready to 'Come Out'

By Chad Hetterley
Staff Writer

Courage, the NT lesbian/gay/bisexual organization, will meet today at 7 p.m. in Art Building 223 to discuss plans for National Coming Out Day and other upcoming events.

More than 50 group members, along with representatives from the Bruce Hall Association and Harvest MCC Campus Ministries, marched in the Allen Ross Freedom Parade in Oak Lawn on Sunday. Scott Maitland, Courage vice president, said, "It went really great. We had the largest student group represented."

Maitland said there were also representatives from SMU and UT-Arlington marching in the parade.

"It's not really a political thing, it's just a day to come out and relax and for everybody to celebrate themselves," he said. "It was also great to get the support from Bruce Hall. They showed their support by carrying a sign that said, 'Straight But Not Narrow.'"

Maitland said the group has averaged about 50 people at each meeting this semester.

"This is definitely the best semester we've had so far," he said.

The group is preparing for Coming Out Week, which takes place the second week in October. Maitland said the group is placing Courage COWs around campus with information about famous gay and lesbian personalities and information describing gay pride symbols.

The week kicks off Oct. 8 at the State Fair with appearances by Candice Gingrich, Newt Gingrich's half-sister; and Chastity Bono, the daughter of Sonny and Cher.

"It's a day for gays and lesbians to come out as who they really are," Maitland said. "This year's theme is 'A Family Outing.'"

Courage representatives will also have a table set up in front of the University Union during the week, Maitland said.

"We want to let everyone know that we're here and to introduce people to what we do," he said.

On Oct. 21, the group is holding "Fall Follies," a drag show that will raise money for Courage and the AIDS Interfaith Network, an AIDS awareness organization coming to Denton County. The show will be held at Bedo's in Denton. Tickets are available now for $7.

Courage is also sponsoring a visit by Dian Hardy Garcia, head of the gay and lesbian lobby in Austin. She will speak Nov. 15 and the group is seeking co-sponsorship from the University Program Council.

Maitland said Courage is open to everyone and is not limited to gays and lesbians.

"Everyone is welcome whether you're a student or not," said Maitland.

For information, call the Courage voice-mail number at 565-6110.