

OPALGA Bulletin

Oak Park Area Lesbian and Gay Association • 1145 Westgate, Suite 106 • Oak Park, Illinois 60301

Ch-Ch-Changes . . .

Mel Wilson

We have moved! Although we are located in the same building, we have moved to Suite 106 (directly below the old space). Our new office space is bigger, better, more accessible, and more flexible to meet the growing needs of our organization.

Currently our office manager, Joyce Daley, is in Tuesday through Thursday from 2:30-5:30. We hope to expand our open office hours to include more evening/week-end times when either Joyce or a board member will be available. Check the Info-Line for changes. Also, check our calendar of events for meetings and open houses. All meetings are open to members and guests.

On another note, the OPALGA *Bulletin* has grown up to become a magazine—perhaps a small one, but a magazine none-the-less. This is the first issue of the new quarterly magazine format OPALGA *Bulletin* created by the OPALGA Communications Committee with fresh input of new volunteer writers, the steady assistance of Joyce Daley, and the invaluable expertise of graphic

artist Julie Kreiner of JAK Graphic Solutions. Beginning with this issue, the *Bulletin* will be produced on OPALGA's office computer using the powerful desktop program Quark XPress. We hope that the *Bulletin* will grow to become a significant vehicle for communication within OPALGA while providing insight for the community at large.

Revitalizing OPALGA's communications is the challenge of our Communications Committee for the coming year. While members will continue to receive timely news throughout the monthly OPALGA *Newsletter* and monthly calendar, we hope to pursue new opportunities to let our voices heard.

Our new format and computer capabilities enable us to cover a wider range of topics, provide for reader responses, and present in-depth feature articles. We hope that members will enjoy the fresh, new look of the *Bulletin*, enjoy hearing from our new writers, and that you will feel free to let us know your opinions.

Your Chance to be Heard!

Helen Bishop

In the last year, the Oak Park Area Lesbian & Gay Association took risks and made a significant contribution in helping to hang onto the right of Oak Park residents to register as domestic partners at Village Hall. We did it! We also received a most welcome award from the Human Rights Campaign, in part because of our leadership in this lengthy struggle.

Now, however, we have the luxury of asking, "What sorts of programs, speakers, topics, events are we interested in for ourselves?" It's appropriate that we focus this year on the needs and interests of our members and friends. We have a bigger, more spacious office that would lend itself to small group meetings, for example. Would you like to participate in a book group? Support

group for people working through "coming out" issues? A chance to meet and network with other g/l/b/t professionals? A speaker to discuss women's or men's health issues? A workshop on the creative process for you right-brain folks? The sky is the limit!

Please let us know what you would like, and are interested in supporting through your presence. You can reach co-chair Helen Bishop by email at: HHBishop@aol.com, or co-chair Steve Glickman at sglickma@ssi.navtech.com.

Don't have access to a computer? Call the OPALGA hotline and leave a message, which will be collected by our awesome office manager, Joyce Daley, and forwarded to the appropriate person(s).

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Calendar

October 1998

Domestic Violence Awareness Month
National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October 3

Illinois Federation for Human Rights will benefit from tonight's "A Statement for Freedom 5," a cabaret evening showcasing gay and lesbian talent from across the great state of Illinois at Park West, 322 West Armitage Avenue, Chicago. For details, call 773.477.7173

October 6

Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame Annual Celebrity Auction at the Cellblock, 3702 N. Halsted, Chicago. Join dozens of the lesbian community's movers, shakers, s/heroes, and celebutantes to raise funds to host this year's induction ceremony. For details, call Gary Chichester at 773.281.5077

October 11

National Coming Out Day (see page 8 for other events)

October 19-30

NAMES Project/Chicago Chapter AIDS Memorial Quilt Display at Erie Teen Health Center, 1523 W. Chicago Avenue, Chicago.

October 21

1998 Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony 5:30-7 pm at the Chicago Cultural Center, Preston Bradley Hall. This year's illustrious inductees are: Carrie Barnett, Tom Chiola, Laurie Dittman, Jorjet Harper, Jeanette Howard Foster (posthumous), Art Johnston, Ira Jones (posthumous), Renae Ogletree, Dean Robert Ogren, Victor A. Salvo, Jr., Tico Valle, Luule Vess, Lesbigan Radio, and as "Friends of the Community," Clifford Kelley and Dorothy Klefstad. For more details, call 312.744.7911

October 31

Howard Brown Health Center's 15th Annual Dinner and Silent Auction at the Chicago Hilton and Towers Grand Ballroom. This year's theme is "Spellbound," and the festivities begin at 7 pm. Tickets are \$400 for Patrons and \$200 for Friends. The event also features a late-night dance party, "Scream," from 10 pm until 2 am. 1998 For more details, please call Mark Becker at 773.388.8992.

Lesbigan Radio Chicago

*Chicagoland's first commercial
gay/lesbian radio show
With your host Alan Amberg*

Mon-Fri: 6-9 am on
WNDZ - AM - 750



First United Church of Oak Park

848 Lake Street
708.386.5215

An Open Community
United in Love &
Justice

OPALGA Board Sets Priorities

Mel Wilson

OPALGA will direct its energies toward organization building and member support in the coming year, board members decided at their annual retreat, July 27. The meeting, held at West Suburban Hospital, provided the first opportunity for old and newly-elected board members to discuss many issues that had long been deferred due to the intensity of the domestic partnership registry ordinance and referendum campaigns last year.

Prior to meeting, participants had prepared individual lists of priorities for the coming year including development of a lesbian/gay community center, a speakers bureau, a campaign for expanded recognition of lesbian/gay families, exploration of more alternative sources of funding, and initiation of new cultural and media/communications projects.

However, following lengthy discussion of needs and priorities, board members recognized the need to turn attention back to the gay and lesbian community itself to answer expressed needs of OPALGA members and to further strengthen the organization. In the end, board members settled on five principal goals for the coming year:

Program Goals

Board members settled on five principal programming goals for the coming year. All but one of these goals is directed specifically towards the organization's membership.

Revive bimonthly membership meetings and develop retention strategies

In the early years of OPALGA, the organization conducted monthly and/or bimonthly membership meetings, open to all, bringing people together, oftentimes with outside guest speakers, to discuss community needs, cultural topics, and personal experiences. The meetings provided an opportunity for community members to get to know each other, share experiences, debate a wide variety of topics, and to find means for expanding of opportunities for lesbians and gay men in our community. The meetings gave vitality to the organization and the lesbian/gay community of Oak Park and surrounding areas.

Somehow, over the course of years, those meetings became fewer in number and finally, in the last two years, disappeared altogether. Although OPALGA continued to grow in size, the organization itself became weaker as board members were left to undertake project by themselves.

Increase OPALGA membership, including strategies to target lesbians and racial/ethnic minorities

As a result of the organization's leadership role in initiating public policy reforms and public recognition of gay and lesbian people, OPALGA has grown to be one of the largest lesbian/gay organizations in the Midwest. The organization, however, represents only a small minority of the totality of lesbian and gay men in Chicago's west suburban area.

Predominately white, predominately middle class, and predominately male; OPALGA does not represent a cross section of the lesbian/gay community as a whole. Board members are committed to increasing OPALGA's base of support and to expanding its activities in addressing needs of all lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered persons.

Sponsor more social events

A glance at OPALGA's monthly calendar of events will show that the organization has reached an all-time low in the number of sponsored social events. Meanwhile, OPALGA's monthly potlucks continue to draw an increasing number of people searching for opportunities to be together with other lesbian/gay people in non-bar settings. In previous member-interest surveys, the most frequently expressed need has been for increased social contact with other lesbian/gay people. Board members have pledged to expand OPALGA's social programming in the coming year.

Conduct outreach programs for lesbians and gay adults

Lesbian/gay people everywhere oftentimes find themselves isolated from their communities—both their communities as a whole and their communities of fellow lesbian/gay people. In a society hostile to lesbians, gay men and bisexuals; many, in

fact, find no community at all. For many, the price of social acceptance has been the closet—the choice of safety vs. freedom.

OPALGA board members have committed themselves to developing programs offering both safety and freedom and to celebrating our lives.

Increase understanding and acceptance of gays and lesbians

OPALGA's public education programs will continue in the coming year through programs bridging the gap between lesbians and gay men and their communities at-large.

Organizational Goals

Organizational goals decided upon by board members include

Improve structure of committees and board

The OPALGA board will be reviewing the committee structure of the organization over the course of the next several months. Some of the committees have become inactive in the past year, some need new leadership and some have simply outlived their original purpose. OPALGA's committees are a direct response to needs and/or programs. OPALGA will be polling members in coming months in order to be more

(cont. on p. 5)

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

"Embracing the diversity of God's creation & celebrating our oneness in Christ"

Corner of East & Randolph, Oak Park
708.848.4741 or
708.848.2144, Jack Finney, Pastor

An affirming Congregation in the Reconciled in Christ Program of Lutherans Concerned/North America



Let's Pet

Is the bathroom scale telling you that the dog is now a candidate for Jenny Craig? Are you tired of those disgusting little presents the cat leaves you? Not quite sure what to feed that ferret you just got for your birthday? Well, look no further. You are in the right place. In future issues, this space will feature Dr. John Brancel, DVM, and his co-consultants "Brick," for canine complaints, and "Kodak" for all things feline.

Dr. John received his doctorate in veterinary medicine from the University of Illinois in Urbana in 1982. For the last 10 years, he has been building a house call practice in Oak Park and environs. Most recently he has opened a full service practice right here in Oak Park on

Madison St., called Prairie State Animal Hospital. He's a member of the Chicago, Illinois State, and American Veterinary Medical Associations. He serves on the Pet Loss Helpline Committee for the CVMA. Dr. John's interests are in small animal medicine and surgery: dogs, cats, ferrets, rabbits, rodents, and other household pets.

If you have a question you would like Dr. John to answer in the new quarterly advice column, please send them to:

Dr. John Brancel
1145 Westgate Suite 106
Oak Park, Ill. 60301

Spilling the Beans: Experiencing food in the Oak Park Area

Brookhart

The Desert Café
6818 West North Avenue
Chicago, Illinois
(773) 745-7272

If you are looking for a gay and lesbian friendly restaurant featuring contemporary American cuisine with a southwestern flair, it is right on the edge of Oak Park. The Desert Café at 6818 W North Ave. in Chicago offers an intimate dining room and a romantic outdoor patio; a zesty and varied menu; and accommodating service.

Shortly after entering the dining room, we were greeted by Ron, the owner. He offered to seat us, and we requested a table on the patio, which required a ten minute wait. In the meantime we were offered a table in the dining room where we enjoyed before dinner cocktails.

Looking around the dining room, we were pleased to recognize a number of familiar faces. Before long, we were led to our candle-lit table on the patio.

After perusing the list of daily specials, we opted for one of the house specialties, boneless breast of duck, and a sauté of fresh walleye pike. The waiter brought us a basket with a mix of hearty fresh baked whole grain and soft, crusty

white breads while we were waiting for our soup and salad. Entrees come with choice of soup or salad. The soup of the day was a choice of chicken gumbo or cream of spinach. The salad comes with a variety of dressings, including the house specialty made with a blend of lime and tequila. We ordered the chicken gumbo, which was hearty and delightful with a hint of cayenne. The salad was fresh and crisp, with just the right amount of dressing.

The main course consisted of ample portions and were accompanied with long grain and wild rice, carrots, and broccoli. The duck was moist and fresh, roasted with a chipolte honey glaze and served with cassis brandy sauce. The sauce was delicate and complimented the fowl well. The fish was light and crispy on the bottom, and tender throughout, not overcooked. It was complimented with a light jacima salsa. The carrots had a buttery flavor, with just the right amount of seasoning. The broccoli, on the other hand, was slightly overcooked. The rice was just right!

While we did not order appetizers on this visit, I have sampled the vegetable enchiladas and the Papaya and brie

quesadilla other times. They are highly recommended. Also worth mention are the mustard pork chops - the tangy Dijon and horseradish mustard balances the pork well. Entrees are priced from \$12.95 to 16.95, appetizers are around \$6.00.

Bon Appetite!

The Independent Holy Catholic Church
Church of the Holy Family

Grace Place
637 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60605

Rev. James Alan Wilkowski, Pastor
Mr. Joseph M Maynard, Senior Warden

Sunday Mass at 1:00 p.m.

773.721.5383
708.597.4402

Ask Aunti Vi

Please allow me to introduce myself. I am your loving, caring and when necessary, brutally candid Aunti Vi. I am here to listen to your problems, hear out your gripes, and to pass on the sage wisdom which I have acquired throughout the years. No problem is too little, unless "that" is the problem.

I will take each question seriously, and will not scoff at or belittle you unless your comments are inane. Auntie has no time for that.

In other words, "I am you." But I am not Linda Tripp. I will NOT tape your conversations, and share them with Kenneth Starrless. I will not write a book with Lucianne Goldberg, exposing your

sex or sexless life. I will not inspect your clothing for suspicious stains. That was your mother's job in the early pubescent years. Can you imagine?

By the way, what do you think of this presidential mess?

- Is Bill Clinton a sex maniac?
- What was he thinking?
- Are you outraged by his behavior?
- Is this issue overshadowing a more important political agenda?
- Why hasn't N.O.W. taken a stand?
- Should Hillary forgive him?
- Should Hillary do a "Lorena Bobbit" on him?
- Do you care?

Closer to home:
Referendum?

- Did you vote in the Registry?
- Did you Register? Why? Why not?
- Do you miss Pride Agenda bookstore?
- What will take its place?

Behind closed doors:
Do you have a problem with your partner or vice-versa?

- What counts most in your relationship?
- Are you having trouble getting into a relationship?

Talk to your Aunti Vi, I am listening!

OPALGA Board Sets Priorities

(cont. from p. 3)

responsive to needs and interests of the community. Committees will change as the organization's programming becomes clear.

Develop effective communication strategies

Substantial energies are being directed toward improved communications between members. Production of the OPALGA Bulletin and newsletters is being moved from the home of the committee co-chair to the OPALGA office where responsibility for production may be shared among committee members and Joyce Daley, our office administrator. In order to streamline distribution and provide timely delivery, the format of the Bulletin is changing to a more brief monthly newsletter, OPALGA News, and a quarterly OPALGA Bulletin (the format you are use to).

OPALGA will continue to develop more efficient communications through changes in the telephone InfoLine and the Internet.

Determine accountability

With increased growth in the organization, it is impossible to continue the laissez faire practices of quasi autonomous projects, committees and task forces

OPALGA has employed in the past. In coming months, board members and committee co-chairs will work to develop leadership structures to assure unity for the organization as a whole.

Diversify resources

As a community, membership organization; OPALGA has always depended on the contributions of members through dues, fundraising events, and individual contributions. Community service projects such as the youth drop-in center have received additional funds from churches, township government, and the Oak Park and Cook County Departments of Public Health (for AIDS prevention education). In the coming year OPALGA will seek a wider field of resources from foundations, government, and other community institutions.

Network with other community organizations

In the past, OPALGA has operated independently as an Oak Park community organization with a primary focus on Oak Park. This has been true despite the fact that a third of OPALGA's members reside outside of Oak Park. Recognizing that fact, the organization changed its name to

the Oak Park Area Lesbian and Gay Association several years ago.

Many community organizations and institutions share goals and objectives that parallel those of OPALGA. As an organization that values diversity and that seeks equity for all people, OPALGA must be more responsive to other community organizations and work with others to share experiences and resources. Board members have committed to seeking further ways of bridging gaps existing between organizations, joining others for joint projects, providing support when we can and increasing our presence and commitments consistent with our mission.

HIV Testing Free/Anonymous

320 Lake Street
Oak Park, IL

NEW: Oral or Blood Tests

Thursday: AM & PM Hours
Call: 708.445.3340, ext. 2253
for an appointment

Barbara Furlong Interview

Julie A. Kreiner

Barbara Furlong is the current Village President of Oak Park, after serving previously as a Village Trustee. A product of the midwest, she was born November 28, 1931 in Cleveland, Ohio. President Furlong went on to become a Registered Medical Technologist, working at Rush-Presbyterian St. Luke's in Chicago, and then was the Lab Manager of their Satellite Facility. Always immersed in human rights, she worked with strengthening the Fair Housing Act in various states since 1958. Since moving to Oak Park she was a past president of the Oak Park Regional Housing Center, past Chair of the Oak Park Community Relations Commission, past Chair of the Housing Committee of the Racial Diversity Task Force along with other board work too lengthy for space allowed.

She has been a true friend of the gay and lesbian community and helped keep the struggle for establishment of the Domestic Partnership Registry and Registry Referendum debates on a calm, even keel.

What memories do you have of that whole lively debate?

My memories go back to 1989, when I ran for the Village Board, the subsequent board who served from 1991 to 1995 did indeed give health care benefits to gay employees of Oak Park. In the next election, the issue of the registry became an issue during the campaign and indeed we committed during the campaign that those of us who were running would support the registry. It was also contentious, but I do think we had made a bit of progress since 1989.

How would you compare this civil rights issue to how most people conceive of civil rights? Because I know a lot of people like to separate civil rights as usually being concerned with a black issue.

Well I think you're right when you do say civil rights, most people do think of white/black issues and in fact, the issues I had been involved in for a long, long time had been, mainly, the issues of fair open housing, which really was in those days a black and white issue more than anything else. But in my mind, if a government can indeed provide and protect a particular class of rights without impinging on anybody else's rights, I think we have the responsibility to do that.

How do you think we can broaden the issue in people's minds, that it is more of a diverse issue? How to get more non-gay, black people involved so that there isn't that much of a separation?

I'm not sure there is a total separation. Last Sunday I went to the giant potluck that Jim Bushey and Ricky Sain give. For many people there isn't a huge separation. It was pretty obvious that we do have a group of people who oppose the registry, but they're part of the diversity of Oak Park. And that's one of the major challenges in Oak Park. If we say we're going to be diverse, then we have to think about *all* of the kinds of diversity. One of the harder issues of diversity is in Oak Park's long term commitment

to the housing units. If indeed you have a great need as we do for increasing tax space. But we have made that effort, so we continue to have that commitment to economic diversity. But it's no easier than any of the other kinds of diversity.

Any thoughts as the registry was getting passed of the groundbreaking that is was to become. Oak Park becoming only the 13th city in the country with a domestic partnership registry?

I certainly didn't set out to do this to be a groundbreaker. I knew what the numbers were and so that really certainly didn't play any role in my decision.

How do you feel about gays becoming more involved in the Oak Park political process?

In fact, I've been delighted to see so many gay people in the community come forward to volunteer to serve on our boards and commissions, and indeed a number have been appointed to boards and commissions. Citizens having an active role in the government of Oak Park has been one of the strengths of this community for a very long time.

A lot of people believe that gay people are only involved in gay issues. In fact OPALGA believes that people need to get involved in the whole large picture.

Right, that is important, and certainly anything that can be done to encourage that to continue is important. I am pleased that we are helping people.

In the economics of the village, and common belief that once this registry was passed there would be a large influx of gay people....

Yes, and that property values were going to go down, and the schools were going to go to hell....

Do you think this has had any impact on Oak Park either financially, or as a "tourist" city?

The registry? No, absolutely not.

I have to tell you that I shared this story with Nathan and Mel at that potluck on Sunday because I thought it was kind of funny.

Three to four weeks ago a reporter from Newsweek called me, in the process of putting together an article, and the focus sounded like it was going to be "how gay is too gay", meaning what's acceptable in a community. So we talked for about half-an-hour and she asked me some of the same questions, "so what's been the impact," and "how many people have registered," and we really got to laughing by the end of the interview because she said "I don't think there's much of a story here," and I said, "I think you're right," because it was very difficult to get this passed, but no bad things have happened in the community. Well then, subsequent to that, I don't know if you saw the issue of Newsweek, it did indeed a feature story, and by that time this full page ad had appeared in some publications about "curing" homosexuals, and so that was the focus they took. So they never



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Barbara Furlong Interview

(cont. from p. 6)

mentioned Oak Park which is perfectly fine with me.

It happened, we're moving ahead, and I don't think there has been any kind of negative impact at all.

I know this is fortune-telling, but where would you see the gay community 10, 20 years from now. Do you still see it being considered as a separate entity or melding more into the whole community?

I don't know if melding is the right word. My sincere hope for Oak Park and the purpose for how we want Oak Park to succeed, is as a diverse community. I'm not sure that means that differences between people fade away. But differences don't have to be a totally bad thing. We all agree this would be a pretty staid community without our diversity. If I wanted a

community where everybody agreed with everything, I can think of a lot of far flung suburban communities where I could go. And I do think it is part of the dynamics of Oak Park, that we do have the diversity. We do have some differences among each other, but we hopefully are learning to all live together.

How about this "hidden agenda" that the gay community is always accused of? That gay people will be infiltrating the schools and teaching the gay lifestyle? Do you have any feeling that this is happening?

I have no idea whether it's happening.

I doubt it's happening.

I do think because there are gays who have children that they need to find a way to become active in the schools, as they are finding ways to become active in the

village. I can foresee that it might be more difficult to achieve that because there *will* be some people in the schools who will continue to believe that the only reason that a gay parent might be there is because they want their "philosophy," whatever that may be, taught. I think what the gay population has to do is to really demonstrate to people in the schools that they want what everybody else wants. That they want good schools where kids are achieving. Because no matter how liberal people are, very often there comes a point when they decide it's "too gay," it's "too black," or too "whatever," and they leave and we don't want that to happen.

One last question, do you think gay people are born or "made" that way?

(laughing) I really don't want to comment on something like that.

Oak Park Community Mourns a Loss

Mel Wilson

Oak Parkers suffered a major loss with the death of long-time activist Carol Zientek, 59, in a car accident on Interstate 90 near Madison, Wisconsin, July 9. Her business and personal partner, Carole Goodwin, and a friend, Joyce Klein, who were also in the vehicle suffered minor injuries. The women were driving their Ford van to a weekend book sale in St. Paul, Minnesota, when Zientek suddenly lost control of the book-laden van, which swerved and overturned. Zientek was killed immediately.

Zientek and Goodwin, "the two Carols", had lived together for 27 of their 32-year relationship and operated the Left Bank Bookstall, at 104 S. Oak Park Avenue, in Oak Park for 19 years before closing it in July of last year. In addition to used books on general interest topics, the Left Bank Bookstall provided resources for the gay and lesbian community through an offering of gay-sensitive books, ticket sales to lesbigay events, information referrals, and widespread support of diversity in community life. In the years prior to the founding of OPALGA, the Left Bank Bookstall was the singularly vital supportive institution for lesbians and gays in Oak Park. Speaking out publicly on topics

of gay and lesbian concern, providing relevant cultural resources, and making their presence strongly felt on "The Avenue", the two Carols gave lesbians and gays a reality otherwise absent from community life.

Following closure of the Left Bank Bookstall, the two Carols had begun a new business selling used and antiquarian books on the Internet and from an antique mall in Sawyer, Michigan. "This was their golden time," Val Camiletti, long-time friend and owner of Val's Hala, said of Zientek and Goodwin. The two had retired so they could, among other things, travel the country and indulge their book-buying passion and celebrate their time together.

An unsuccessful candidate for village trustee in 1981, Zientek maintained her activist role in development of a stronger gay and lesbian community in Oak Park throughout her life. Zientek was among the original founders of the Oak Park Area Lesbian and Gay Association in 1989 and co-chaired the first OPALGA/Left Bank Culture Club-sponsored Oak Park Cultural Arts Festival in 1993. She co-chaired the Illinois Gay and Lesbian Task Force from 1994 to 1996 and was instrumental in

getting IGLTF to move their Chicago offices to Oak Park together with OPALGA's establishment of an office in 1996.

She was a member of St. Catherine-St. Lucy's Parish in Oak Park, where she served on the School Board, and was active in promoting equality for women within the ranks of the Catholic Church.

Zientek was a juvenile Cook County probation officer for 30 years before retiring last October. As a probation officer, Zientek was sincere in helping juveniles get out of the trouble cycle by exerting a tough love attitude and confronting them in finding the means to change their lives. She was pro-labor and helped in establishing a local of the AFSCME union at Juvenile Court.

Zientek was raised in Maywood and graduated from Columbia College in Chicago.

Zientek is survived by Goodwin; a niece, Patricia Staley; a nephew, Brian Zientek; great-nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents and a brother. A public wake was held July 15 in Oak Park, and funeral was held July 16 at St. Catherine-St. Lucy's Church in Oak Park.

Coming Out Cotillion: October 23, 1998

Oak Park-based Metropolitan Community Church of the Incarnation and Lesbigan Radio have teamed up to sponsor a Coming Out Cotillion at the Women's Club of Oak Park on October 23, to celebrate National Coming Out Day.

"The main purpose of the event is to establish a fund for responding to anti-gay ads placed in major newspapers by the religious right," says MCC Pastor Bradley Mickelson.

Earlier this year, a coalition of extreme religious right groups purchases full-page ads condemning the gay/lesbian lifestyle in major newspapers across America, including The Chicago Tribune. Alan Amberg of Lesbigan Radio, organized a Chicago Tribune ad containing a rebuttal to the religious right's outright lies about

our people and our community.

Several Oak Park residents are members of the Honorary Cotillion Committee. Joanne Trapani along with Mary Morten, Chicago's liaison to the gay/lesbian community, are the Honorary Co-Chairs. The Honorary Committee also includes Alan Amato, Ted Korbos, Steve Glickman, and Robert S. Ward.

Although the end purpose of the Cotillion is serious, the evening promises to be just plain fun. A \$60 ticket includes two cocktails, dinner, dancing, and entertainment by Honey West, Michael James, and other stars of our community. There will also be a silent auction and raffle. Tickets may be purchases by calling 1-888-GO-OUT-GAY or Sandy 708-771-5779. Major credit cards accepted.



MCC of the Incarnation and Lesbigan Radio sponsor

National Coming Out Day Oct 11

Steve Glickman

**Chicago Premiere of
Out of the Past
Oct 11 at 2:00 p.m.
Univ. of Illinois Circle Campus**

Save the afternoon of Sunday, October 11, National Coming Out Day, to attend the Chicago Premiere of Out of the Past. This film was the recipient of the Audience Award for Best Documentary at the Sundance Film Festival. Out of the Past traces the emergence of gay men and lesbians in American history through the eyes of a young woman coming to terms with herself and her place in the world. The hour-long film explores the critical link between knowledge of history and knowledge of self. The film features five personal stories:

Michael Wiggelsworth, a 17th century cleric whose Day of Doom became the best seller of colonial America and who struggled throughout his life because of the conflict between his sexuality and his faith;

Sarah Orne Jewett, a nineteenth century novelist who lived in a "Boston marriage" with Anne Fields;

Henry Gerber, who founded America's first gay rights group, the Society for Human Rights, in Chicago in 1924;

Bayard Rustin, organizer of the 1963 March on Washington, where Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his famous speech "I Have a Dream"; and

Barbara Gittings, who helped organize the first public pickets for gay rights outside the White House in the early Sixties.

We are pleased that Barbara Gittings will be speaking after the screening. A dessert reception will follow.

OPALGA is co-sponsoring this exciting event with GLSEN/Chicago (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network). To reserve tickets at \$15 each, call the OPALGA Info-Line (708) 848-0273.

Feel like you're missing out on fun and interesting times?
Join OPALGA!



Our Own Coming Out Stories

Open House, Wednesday, October 14 at 7:30 PM

In celebration of National Coming Out Day, share your own coming out stories with other OPALGA members in a free-form discussion. All of us have personal coming out stories to tell, some of them with happy endings, some of them not. Whether tearful or joyful, come and share YOUR stories, in our comfy new office! Refreshments served.

REVIEW

Bi & Gay married men's support group

End the Isolation

Call Jerry at 630.627.1990 or email: ReviewGp@aol.com

Human Rights Campaign Dinner and Dance

Jane Anderson

On July 25th OPALGA board members attended the annual Human Rights Campaign Dinner and Dance. The dinner was a festive occasion with tuxes and evening gowns in abundance. Celebrities highlighted the night with Patrick Bristow from Ellen, Dan Butler from Frasier and Betty DeGeneres, better known as Ellen's mom, in attendance. Original works of art, bicycles, wonderful treats for humans and pets, weekend getaways and an autographed copy of the "Puppy Dog" script from Ellen were some of the tempting items at the silent auction. All in all it was a fabulous night!

Our OPALGA contingency attended not just for fun but to accept one of the 1998 Equality Awards which is bestowed upon organizations and individuals who through their significant contributions promote civil liberties, equality and justice for the lesbian community. Other recipients included Mary Morten, the current director and liaison with the Chicago Commission of Human Relations Advisory Council on Gay and Lesbian Issues. The third honoree was GLSEN, the Gay,

Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, the largest national organization that brings together teachers, parents, students and concerned citizens from all walks of life. Their primary mission is to fight anti-gay bias in schools across the country.

The HRC program highlighted OPALGA's accomplishments in the following areas: PRISM Youth Network, establishment of the Domestic Partner Registry and Domestic Partnership Benefits, and inclusion of sexual orientation in the Oak Park-River Forest High School's Human Dignity Policy. In addition, we were honored for our first benchmark success, the adoption of the Oak Park Village Human Rights Ordinance.



As our accomplishments were listed, we were reminded of the many varied members and supporters whose commitment, dedication and sacrifice through the years brought about these goals to fruition. Without you, OPALGA would not have the achievements we celebrate today, so we say to you, our members and friends, thank-you.

Pride Parade 1998



Just a few of the people who participated with the OPALGA contingent during the Pride Parade this year.



OPALGA Pit Crew

Merle Shapera and Sherry Magdic

Calling all masochists who are seeking a grueling way of spending a week off of work doing good for others. Honest! However, **POSITIVELY GUARANTEED:** You will agree that the week's effort was one of the most rewarding experiences of your life.

We are talking about the 4th annual Chicago/Minneapolis/Wisconsin AIDS Ride. Sherry and I crewed for the ride last summer, Sherry for the medical crew, and I for the sweep crew. We worked long, hard hours, with little sleep, but spent the week with over 1700 inspiring, loving riders, crew, and staff members, and enjoyed fabulous hot meals, wonderful entertainment each night, and, believe it or not, hot showers for our very weary bones.

What we noticed as the week progressed, was that the crew having the most fun and seemingly, the least amount of hours to work, were the pit stop crews. Picture this: each 15 miles or so, the bikers are encouraged to rest and replenish their energy and fluid stores at a watering hole decorated, furnished and serviced by a specific pit crew. Each pit crew plans in advance a different theme for their particular pit stop each and every day. In other words, 6 themes for 6 days. The scenarios went from the sublime to the ridiculous. Examples include Susan Powter, with the men dressed as Susan in leotards, leading everyone in aerobics as they served up their Gatorade and fruit; Madonna, with Madonna hits blasting from loudspeakers as other drag queens marched

around in blonde wigs and large crosses; the lounge lizards, who dressed as cocktail waitpersons and served their Gatorade in martini glasses. It seemed to get more and more outrageous as the week progressed, and the members of each pit stop seemed to be having the time of their lives.

So, to get to the point: Sherry and I are proposing that OPALGA organize one pit crew for next summer's ride. The ride begins in Minneapolis Monday July 12th and ends in Chicago on Saturday July 17th. However, all crew persons must be in Minneapolis by 2:00 PM Sunday July 11th. The fee to participate is \$45 per crew member. Besides the expense of getting oneself to Minneapolis and paying for your own dinner and a night's hotel stay Sunday evening, there are no other expenses. All food is provided. Everyone sleeps in provided tents, two to a tent. You bring the bedding/sleeping bags. There are minor expenses in providing the decorations for each pit stop; however, the group could no doubt find creative ways to raise a few bucks to pay for it all.

We can organize a group as small as twelve individuals or as large as twenty. We need a final count for the AIDS RIDE office by January at the latest. Not only could this be a blast for all involved, but will serve as a great way to promote our organization and recruit new members. If you are interested, call us at (708) 524-2663.

Need to Publish?

OPALGA's Communication Committee is always on the lookout for stories, articles, news items, or photos for our new quarterly Bulletin. So send those informative pieces off to our office (1145 Westgate, Suite 106, Oak Park, IL 60301) and hey, you'll even get a by-line or photo credit if it's published!

1998 AIDS Walk

OPALGA had a team contingent this year at AIDS Walk Chicago on September 27. We are proud to say that one of our members, Kris Strieter raised \$1,200.00! Go girl!

Rumor has it that she received a "gold crown," though she chose not to wear it out of modesty.

June 18 GALA

OPALGA's OPAL ▼ GALA is held this year on Friday, June 18, 1999. We are looking for all interested (and energetic) people to help make this celebration of our 10th anniversary another success. For more information contact the co-chairs: Ray Johnson at 386.4851, or Julie Kreiner at 358.1530.

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1998 Wimmin's Music Festival

Lynn Hull

Even though the major purpose of WWTMC is supposed to be wimmin's music, I mainly go to immerse my radical lesbian feminist mind in the discourse of political workshops. This year proved to be a mecca!

Kay Leigh Hagen provided numerous workshops all week long which included UTEROPIA (vision of a feminist utopia, prediction of the possible cateclism of society in Y2K, and the opportunity to change the world to a more feminist way during that social chaos); how internalized sexism stifles wimmin's writing/creative process; scary info about nuclear secrets (that aren't secret); and inspiration drawn from Kay's life via sermon.

Alice Walker's appearance and reading

drew so many to the acoustic stage that there was barely a single square inch left for even a medium-sized grasshopper to occupy! Alice read an excerpt from her forth-coming book which she termed a "celebration of wimmin's sexuality"—she felt compelled to write it to offset her other downer-reality writings & research, i.e. African genital mutilation and incest. The reading was "quite stimulating" and she promised the whole novel was brimming over with such erotica.

A "lips-on" kissing workshop was almost as popular as Alice Walker's performance. Every nook and cranny was jam-packed with wimmin's bodies and the endless parade of apprentices was still arriving. This was presented by "Good

Vibrations" and the array of activities included helping one's partner discover new erotic zones all over her face and neck, exploring new dimensions with tongue-kissing and biting, and refreshing your thirsty partner with a drink of cool Michigan water lazily dripped from between your lips to between hers.

And lastly, a relatively new comedian, "Elvera" out of Canada, besides giving her own highly energetic, fresh performance, MC'd a goodly number of other performances. A marvelously natural "ad libber" with a compelling stage presence, quick witted with timely comebacks and filler, she's an act you need to see!

Attention: Condor Alert!

Joyce P. Daley

Be advised that on November 6, Condors will be officially sighted in the Chicago area. If you look to the sky, you will miss them. You need to turn your attention to the University of Illinois-Chicago Pavilion. At 7:00pm that Friday evening, Chicago's very own Women's Professional Basketball team will take the floor to face the Nashville Noise.

In April, those of us hungry to see women's professional basketball return to Chicago were thrilled to hear that Chicago was named an expansion city for the 1998-99 season of the American Basketball League.

The players may be new to Chicago, but they certainly aren't new to basketball. Forwards Katrina McClain, and Adrienne Goodson, and Forward/Center Yolanda Griffith are all ABL veterans and All-Stars. With the Atlanta Glory last season, McClain was among the ABL leaders in points, rebounds, and blocked shots; was two-time All-American in college (Georgia); and has competed on three Olympic teams—1996 gold, 1992 bronze, and 1988 gold. With the Philadelphia Rage 97-98, Goodson was with league leaders in points, rebounds and field goals. She was also leading scorer and rebounder for her college team (Old Dominion). A Chicago native, Griffith

(Florida Atlantic) was the ABL's 1997 No. 1 overall draft pick. When with the Long Beach StingRays in 97-98, she was among league leaders in 5 of the 8 categories. You might have seen her in a recent ABL TV commercial.

Another Olympian is Guard/Forward Cathy Boswell, winning gold on the 1984 U.S. team. A rookie with the Atlanta Glory in 97-98, she was selected by Chicago in the first round of the 1998 ABL Expansion Draft. A native of Shorewood, IL., she achieved legendary heights playing for her college team at Illinois State. She is one of only two Illinois State athletes to have her number retired. Former NBA player and coach Doug Collins is the other.

The roster is rounded out with another Chicagoan, E.C. Hill (Northern Illinois) at Guard; Anita Kaplan (Stanford) at Center; Tausha Mills (Alabama) at Center; Dana Wilkerson (Long Beach State) at Guard; Deanna Tate (Maryland) at Guard; and Barrington native Ashley Berggren (Illinois) at Guard.

The team is coached by Jim Clemons, former Chicago Bulls assistant coach during four of the team's championship season's. Assistant coach is Stephanie Rivera. In 1995, she led the



Chicago Twisters to a 15-1 record and a Women's Basketball Association championship title.

For season tickets, call 312/492-8800. Single game tickets go on sale Oct. 13 through TicketMaster 312/559-1212.

CHICAGO CONDORS 1998-99 Home Game Schedule U of I / Chicago Pavilion

| | | |
|--------------------|------|------------------|
| Friday, Nov. 6 | 7:00 | vs. Nashville |
| Friday, Nov. 20 | 7:00 | vs. San Jose |
| Friday, Nov. 27 | 7:00 | vs. Columbus |
| Friday, Dec. 4 | 7:00 | vs. New England |
| Friday, Dec. 18 | 7:00 | vs. Philadelphia |
| Saturday, Dec. 26 | 7:00 | vs. Philadelphia |
| Friday, Jan. 1 | 3:00 | vs. Nashville |
| Saturday, Jan. 9 | 7:00 | vs. Portland |
| Tuesday, Jan. 12 | 7:00 | vs. San Jose |
| Friday, Jan. 15 | 7:00 | vs. Columbus |
| Sunday, Jan. 17 | 4:00 | vs. Philadelphia |
| Wednesday, Jan. 27 | 7:00 | vs. Portland |
| Saturday, Jan. 30 | 1:00 | vs. Colorado |
| Tuesday, Feb. 2 | 7:00 | vs. Seattle |
| Sunday, Feb. 7 | 4:00 | vs. Columbus |
| Saturday, Feb. 13 | 7:00 | vs. New England |
| Tuesday, Feb. 23 | 7:00 | vs. Columbus |
| Wednesday, Mar. 3 | 7:00 | vs. Colorado |
| Saturday, Mar. 6 | 7:00 | vs. Nashville |
| Wednesday, Mar. 10 | 7:00 | vs. Seattle |
| Friday, Mar. 12 | 7:00 | vs. Philadelphia |
| Wednesday, Mar. 17 | 7:00 | vs. New England |

OPALGA Membership Form

Our year begins January 1. Domestic partner/families may join together.

New Member/s? Yes No

DATE: _____

Name 1: Ms./Mr. _____ Phones: (day) _____ (evening) _____

Address: _____ City/ST/ZIP _____

Name 2: Ms./Mr. _____ Phones: (day) _____ (evening) _____

Please contact me about participating on the following committees:

- Communications Social Cultural Arts Public Policy Youth Membership
 Fundraising Other interests: _____

Optional information that helps us raise funds..

If partners provide for both:

Sex (M/F) _____ Race: _____ Birthyear: _____

PLEASE ENROLL ME AS A MEMBER!

MEMBERSHIP FEE ENCLOSED: \$ _____

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Grand Champion (specify amount) | <input type="radio"/> \$50 Sponsor |
| <input type="radio"/> \$100 Champion | <input type="radio"/> \$25 Basic Individual Membership |
| <input type="radio"/> \$75 Guardian | <input type="radio"/> \$40 Basic Joint/Family Membership |
| <input type="radio"/> OPALGA Reduced Income (membership suggested amount \$15) | <input type="radio"/> \$40 Organizational Membership |

OTHER CONTRIBUTION: _____ **AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$** _____

Please return this form to: OPALGA, 1145 Westgate, Suite 106, Oak Park, Illinois 60301

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Advertising Space

Advertising space is available in the OPALGA monthly Newsletter at a charge of \$10 for a 1-3/4" x 2-1/4" ad. For other size ads, and to advertise in the quarterly Bulletin, please call Joyce Daley at the OPALGA office: 708.848.0273

Prism Youth Network

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Drop-In Center</p> <p>Serving 14–20-year-old youth. Meets every Thursday, 6:30–9 pm at OPALGA offices, 1145 Westgate, Suite 106, Oak Park, Illinois</p> <p>Info-Line: 708.FUN.FIND</p> | <p>Information and service referrals sensitive to minority youth and their families</p> <p>Advocacy</p> <p>Contact: Vivian O'Dell or Rob Ward at 708.386.3463</p> |
|---|--|