

OPALGA Bulletin

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

A Year in the Life of OPALGA

Ray Johnson and Steve Glickman

OPALGA had a spectacular 1998 that has provided for a great deal of momentum that will lead us into our 10th Anniversary during 1999. The accomplishments of 1998 would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of the OPALGA Board and all the volunteers who have helped make this year one of the most active in recent memory. Let's review our accomplishments:

✓ In January we hired Joyce Daley as our office manager. Joyce has enabled the board to focus on our future vision and current needs, rather than many administrative duties, by completing important tasks that help keep our organization moving forward. These include answering your calls promptly, completing the mailings of our Newsletter and Quarterly Bulletin in a timely fashion, and keeping logs of important data for grant monies we receive from Cook County for our Youth Groups. Along with her

great administrative skills, her excellent people skills and a great sense of humor keeps us all on track. Way to go Joyce!

✓ OPALGA spearheaded the creation of a grassroots coalition, "Vote YES Oak Park" to ensure passage of the Domestic Partnership Registry Referendum. Due to the efforts of countless Oak Park citizens and organizations, the referendum passed! This historic victory allowed Oak Park to become one of the few municipalities in the country to reaffirm a gay civil rights issue via the democratic process. Thanks to ALL who made this possible, especially Merle Shapera, Sherry Magdic, and Dick Gassen.

✓ The 2nd Annual "OPAL-GALA", led by co-chairs Jim Kelly and Helen Bishop, was a smashing success. With ticket sales up over

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Matthew Shepard Memorial Service

Joyce Daley

On November 12, approximately 200 people held a candlelight procession from the Marion Street mall to First United Church of Oak Park for a memorial service in honor of Matthew Shepard, a gay man brutally murdered in Wyoming.

Prior to the march, OPALGA Treasurer Ray Johnson addressed the crowd with an impassioned plea that we never forget the brutality Matthew endured.

Julie Kreiner, OPALGA Board member, then addressed the crowd with startling statistics on hate crimes.

The power of our numbers and our



emotions carried us into the Memorial Service at First United Church. Each speaker exhorted the crowd to remember Matthew and why he died, to remember all the countless others who have fallen victim to hate, and to work passionately in rooting out hate and intolerance.

Those who organized the procession and memorial service wish to thank the following speakers: Rev. Bobbi Wells Hargleroad; Alan Amato, Public Policy chair, OPALGA; Joanne Trapani, Village of Oak Park Trustee; Vernita Gray, Hate

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Calendar

December 1998 – February 1999

November 26-December 24
5th Annual Christmas Tree and Greens Sale to benefit the **Illinois Federation for Human Rights**. Choose from a large selection of wreaths, garland, and 3-14' tall trees. At the "European and US Car Service" lot 3500 N. Halsted (at Cornelia). For hours or for more information, call 773.477.7173.

January 21

On Thursday at 7pm. **Greg Dell** will be in Oak Park to speak and take questions regarding the Methodist Church heresy trial (see article in this bulletin). More details to follow next month!

January 23-30

Aspen Gay and Lesbian Ski Week. For more information, call 800.444.0680.

January 30

Illinois Federation for Human Rights Second Annual Dinner Dance: "A Greater State of Freedom." At the Hotel Intercontinental, 505 N.

Michigan Avenue. Tix include cocktails and an open bar, with a silent auction, dinner and dancing in the Grand Ballroom. For details, please call 773.477.7173.

February 7

Check out some great ABL women's basketball when the **Chicago Condors** play Columbus on Sunday at 4 pm, UIC pavilion. OPALGA is planning this fun afternoon, so call Sherry Magdic, 708.524.2663 or Gerri Albright, 708.524.3319 for tickets or for more information.

February 12

Carnival '99 **AIDS Care's** Second Annual Gala. This year's Mardi Gras will have a Venetian theme. For more information, call 773.935.4663

February 12-14

Bringing Our Hearts Together XII. Call 773.404.8726 for more details.

Quip of the Quarter: *"If you think you are too small to be effective, you've never been in bed with a mosquito!"*

TOM MURPHY

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Baby News

Pamela Freese and Jill Allread

Dear Friends:

It is our great joy to announce the birth of Jared John Freese Allread. He arrived Tuesday, November 3rd at 3:47 p.m. He weighed 8 lbs 14 oz, and was 21 inches long. And he is stunningly handsome/cute/adorable/sweet.

Many, many thanks to all of you who sent best wishes and thoughts our



way. It means so much to us all to have your support and encouragement through this exciting time.

The latest official stats: 23 inches long; 9 lbs 11 3/4 oz; all stats fall right into the normal 'average' for kiddos his age. We look forward to introducing him to you!

With love, Jill, Pamela, and Jared.

OPAL ▼ GALA 1999 Recruiting Volunteers

We are meeting the second Tuesday of every month, at 7:30 pm, at the OPALGA office to begin coordinating the OPAL ▼ GALA 1999. We will also be celebrating our 10th Anniversary.

Following are the committees we have at present.

- Table Captain Team
- Graphic Design Team
- Publicity Team

- Silent Auction Team
- Banquet Host Team
- Corporate Underwriting Team
- Program Book Sales Team

We are looking for all interested people. So bring your friends and join us in throwing our biggest party of the year.

For more info, phone co-chairs Julie Kreiner, 708.358.1530 or Ray Johnson, 708.386.4851.



**First United
Church of
Oak Park**
848 Lake Street
708.386.5215
An Open Community
United in Love &
Justice

A Year in the Life

(cont. from page 1)

40% from the 1996 Gala and a net profit of \$15,000, our operating budget was balanced this year. OPALGA honored our "OPAL" (Oak Park Area Leaders) recipients Pat and David Spagat, Pam Freese and Jill Allread, Jim Kelly, Rev. Bobbi Wells Hargleroad and the First United Church of Oak Park, and The PRIDE Agenda Bookstore.

✓ OPALGA was awarded the DIGNITY-CHICAGO Award and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) "Equality Award" for our work on diversity issues and the advancement of civil rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people.

✓ We moved into larger quarters this year so that we could accommodate our growing youth programs, PRISM and SPECTRUM. This has also allowed us more meeting space for board and committee meetings in a much more comfortable and spacious setting, eliminating the need to pay additional fees to hold meetings at local libraries. Thanks to Rob Ward and Sam Halferty for helping to make this happen.

✓ We held our annual meeting in May, elected new board members, expanded the current number of members on the board, and honored active members Alan Amato, Pat and David Spagat, Jane Anderson, Merle Shapera, and Sherry Magdic for their dedication in 1997/1998.

✓ OPALGA members continued to open their houses the first Friday of each month for the ever popular potlucks. A big thank-you to all our 1998 potluck hosts.

✓ Once again OPALGA marched in the Chicago Pride Parade, along with PRISM Youth. The beautiful OPALGA float represented our community proudly. Thanks to Paul Cochran, John Kibler, Sherry Magdic, Julie Kreiner, Jane Anderson, and Phil Bellerive.

✓ In the wake of Matthew Shepard's brutal murder, OPALGA coordinated a candlelight vigil and memorial in November. The inspired speeches and beautiful procession of candlelight marchers down Lake street will not be forgotten by the approximately 200

marchers who participated. This event garnered the media spotlight, with prime time TV coverage (Channel 7 news at 10) and front page coverage in the Oak Leaves. Thanks to Alan Amato, Ron Rauch, Julie Kreiner, and Ray Johnson!

Whew...what a year indeed!

So, what will 1999 and our 10 year anniversary bring? We are confident that we will have more new members make the nominal financial commitment we need to continue our success. We are confident that our 1999 Gala will be even more successful with more volunteer help. We are confident that more new and current members will become involved in planning social activities that benefit all of us.

With the steady and determined leadership of our current co-chairs Steve Glickman and Helen Bishop, the OPALGA board, and all of you, we can and will make 1999 a ten-year anniversary to remember!

Let's Pet



Recently, a client brought in her young mixed breed dog "Rex" with a recent history of one week of vomiting and not

keeping food down. Accompanying the woman and dog was her three year old daughter cradling in her arms a very worn looking, but obviously much loved plastic doll. The doll had shocks of hair missing, the painted features on the doll's face were worn off, and the doll had only one arm.

X-rays suggested something was stuck in Rex's stomach and so he was admitted for an exploratory surgery. All went well—a foreign body was removed—actually a foreign body part—and Rex recovered uneventfully.

The little girl was also very happy to have both arms back on her doll, even with one limb slightly chewed.

The coming holiday season is the time of year where I see the highest incidence of gastrointestinal disorders. Lots of new toys, game pieces, ribbon and string, poisonous plants like mistletoe and poinsettia, and poultry and ham bones which can splinter and get lodged somewhere down the line—these are all

very attractive items for pets to swallow. Dogs and cats (and ferrets and birds and other pets) play with and chew on these sorts of things.

So don't forget your pets around the holidays. Buy them their own safe, indestructible chew toys large enough that they can't swallow them, and get them healthy treats so they don't feel left out while we're engorging ourselves. Certainly don't feed them scraps which you wouldn't eat yourself, like gristle or chunks of fat.

Here's hoping you have a safe and happy year end and new year. Watch out for hazards which can harm your pet—it might save you an arm (or a leg) at the emergency clinic.

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

Grape Leaves
129 South Oak Park Avenue
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*Specializing in Middle Eastern Cuisine
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If you want an extraordinary, flavorful, and inexpensive meal, this little morsel of a restaurant is sure to fill the bill. Located just south of the Oak Park Avenue "el" stop, it is easy to miss the inconspicuous storefront which houses Grape Leaves. The dining room, which seats about 15-20, is both intimate and funky. Despite the room's small size, waiting for a table has been a rare occurrence. The friendly and relaxed atmosphere makes for great people watching. The room is decorated with a Middle Eastern flair that is echoed in the background music.

After seating ourselves, we were greeted and given water and warm, soft, pita bread. Our server was friendly, efficient, and informative. We ordered the combo plate as an appetizer. The generous portions of humus, babagannough, and falafel were a perfect

accompaniment to the pitas. The Jerusalem and Lebanese salads are also great starters. The stuffed grape leaves that are the namesake of this establishment deserve honorable mention as well.

Their standard menu is supplemented by four or five daily specials. I highly recommend trying one - they have never failed to delight. On this particular night, we tried two specials: the braised lamb with okra and the chicken shawarma special (an improvisation of the menu version). The lamb was tender and lean. The okra still had a firm and slightly crisp texture. These were combined in a rich tomato based sauce with a hint of sumac and cinnamon. The chicken special was in a lighter sauce, and included mushrooms, onions, and broccoli. These ingredients were all topped with cheese and browned in the oven with a heavenly result. Also worth mentioning are: the chicken sumac, or any of the kabobs.

If the generous portions have not already filled you up, try the Lebanon Nights for dessert along with a cup of Turkish coffee. The restaurant also

features freshly squeezed juices and natural pizza to go. All of the menu items are available for either carry out or delivery. Prices are extremely reasonable (but don't tell them that! We don't want to give them any ideas!).

Bon Appetite!

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Ask Aunti Vi



When I first thought about this column appearing in December, I imagined that it would be holiday related. But deadlines being what they are, and Merle being the taskmaster that she is, I find myself writing to you on election night. With all of this political hub-bub in the air, who can think

about Santa Claus—maybe one of his cute elves—no not now —I just couldn't concentrate.

I will be up all night watching the election returns. I wonder what there is to eat. Guess I'll start with some chips. Well tonight is the big score board. Will Bill Clinton's political goose get cooked at the barbeque being hosted by the Christian Right? Will their predictions of congressional gains come true? I can just hear Newt and his boys smacking their lips. Will we rise above this mess, and prove to our elected officials that there are more important issues than where Monica smacked her lips?

With all this anxiety, I need something sweet. Wonder if there is any Halloween candy left...Ah Reese's Peanut Butter cups. These will do for now. These politics really work up my appetite. Better get back to reality. Will the American public see beyond the smoke screen of this \$50,000,000 witch hunt by Kenneth and his starless crew? Will we allow these acts of personal indiscretion by Bill and Monica to deflect our bigger agenda? Have we forgotten about the importance of investing in education...or maintaining a woman's right of choice...of passing hate crime legislation...of working toward

equal rights for each and every one of us...and so many other important things???

Just thinking about this makes me all verklempt! I need some ice cream, while I tally up the results. Well sifting through the issues, there are pluses and minuses. The biggest plus is that we voted on the issues and rose above the fray. The Christian Right proved to be an albatross around the neck of their supporters, with the loss of 5 seats in the house, and no gains in the Senate, the Republicans must once and for all move beyond the Monica factor. We pushed hard to keep Poshard out of the Governor's Mansion...We did lose a good friend in Carol Moseley-Braun...but most importantly, we stood up to be counted. You made your Auntie proud. Please pass the fudge sauce.

Write to: Auntie Vi
c/o OPALGA
1145 Westgate- Suite 106
Oak Park, IL 60301

Wishing each of you and your special someone a very happy holiday season.

My New Year's resolution is to not mention Bill and Monica in my next column. Please share your resolutions with me. See you next year.



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A Life of Activism: Carol Zientek

Carole Goodwin and Mel Wilson

Carole Goodwin and Carol Zientek met in 1966 and entered into a committed relationship in December of that year. At first the two women lived in Austin, but moved to a rented apartment on North Humphrey in Oak Park in 1971. In 1976 they bought a home on South Humphrey, where Goodwin continues to live today.

Zientek began work as a Cook County Juvenile Probation Officer in 1969. In the beginning she was not "out" at work, but she never really hid her sexual orientation, either. She never hesitated to include Goodwin in all work related social functions, but she did not make any public, overt statement. Gradually, she began telling people closest to her at work, and in time most everyone knew she was gay. As she became more active in gay political causes, her name would appear in print in at least the gay/lesbian media, so there was no question of keeping it a secret. Other probation officers as well as judges frequently went to Zientek for information on resources for gay and lesbian youth who became active with the court.

Zientek was always involved in social and political activities, both in the gay community and the larger gay/straight community. She was one of the few gay or lesbian people at that time who never seemed to feel that her sexual orientation had to be compartmentalized, even though it was sometimes unsafe. Even when she was not making public statements about her orientation, she tried, as much as she could, to bring the gay perspective to all her activities. Thus, she ran for Oak Park Village Trustee (but not as an out lesbian) in 1981. She served on the St. Catherine-St. Lucy School Board and Parish Council.

Carol Zientek was above all, a feminist. Her disgust with the treatment of women and gay and lesbian people by the Catholic Church led her to become involved with Chicago Catholic Women in the mid-eighties. As part of that group, she was on the Lesbian Concerns Committee, networking with city-wide gay groups on civil rights issues, and setting up an annual weekend retreat for lesbians, which still continues. As part of CCW, she demonstrated at Holy Name Cathedral on several occasions, for women's ordination and for women's right to choose.

Zientek joined the board of the Illinois Gay and Lesbian Task Force in 1989. IGLTF was the oldest existing gay/lesbian civil rights group in the Chicago area and had been, until the advent of the Illinois Federation for Human Rights, the foremost organization working for city and state-wide gay rights legislation. IGLTF also distributed gay/lesbian information packets to high school counselors throughout the state, and put up anti-violence posters at CTA stops. Zientek was involved in all of these activities, including trips to Springfield to lobby for the gay-inclusive human rights bill, which, of course has still not passed. Zientek became co-chair of IGLTF in 1992. As the Illinois Federation for Human Rights took over most of the legislative activity, IGLTF focused its efforts more on education and networking. While Zientek was co-chair, IGLTF sponsored two networking conferences for local gay/lesbian community leaders: one in Oak Park for the Chicago area, and one downstate near Champaign.

The Left Bank Bookstall was founded in 1978 by Goodwin and Zientek at a location at 1125 Westgate. Two years later the store was moved to Oak Park Avenue, where it remained until closing in 1997. In the early to mid-eighties, as Oak Park's gay and lesbian population began to be more visible, Goodwin and Zientek



realized that there was a need for an outlet for gay and lesbian literature.

The two women found that it was impossible to find adequate stock of used gay/lesbian books, so they began to stock new books from both the women's and gay and lesbian presses. They continued to sell new gay and lesbian books and travel guides until the opening of Pride Agenda Bookstores. The store carried over a dozen gay and lesbian current magazine titles, and at least as many progressive women-focused periodicals. Throughout the store's existence, the Left Bank also served as a clearing house for gay and lesbian event information and was frequently a ticket outlet for such events. Left Bank always carried the gay/lesbian papers and posted announcements on the bulletin board or made flyers available.

Zientek was a founding member of the Oak Park Lesbian and Gay Association. She was co-chair of the First Cultural Arts Festival and served as producer for the Chris Williamson Concert. This led Zientek and Goodwin to become interested in producing other entertainments on a smaller scale. Left Bank Culture Club was born. According to Goodwin, this came about because there was a very fortunate convergence of people with interest and resources and available free space (through Jim Boherstengel at Gallerie St. James). All the right things were there at the right time, and the first Culture Club night, entitled "An Evening of Women's Performance," was an outstanding success. Several culture club performances followed, each of them attempting to integrate visual and performing arts, and showcasing the work of people – gay, lesbian, women, ethnic minorities – whose voices were not usually given the opportunity to be heard as they should be. Later Zientek also helped in the production of the OPALGA/Culture Club-sponsored Gay Cabarets.

Reflecting on Zientek's life, Goodwin says, "I think the two words that epitomize Carol's efforts and achievements are justice and integration. She was an idealist and was outraged at injustice of any kind. And just as she successfully integrated her own sexual orientation into her total being, she believed in the full integration of gay and lesbian people into society and community."

The Carol Zientek Memorial Fund will contribute to that goal.

Carol Zientek Memorial Fund

As many of you know, Carol Zientek passed away tragically this last July in an automobile accident. Many of us attended the wake and the funeral, and gave our condolences to her family and to Carole Goodwin, her life partner. But for many of us who knew Carol, these acts were not enough.

Why were they not enough? When we think of Carol, we think of her tremendous consistency, permanency, and staying power. She remained with her life partner, Carole Goodwin, for 32 ears

(how many of us wish we could say that?) She worked as a juvenile probation officer for Cook County for 30 years. She, along with Carole, ran the Left Bank Bookstall for over 20 years. She was a crazy Cubs fan and a gregarious golfer all of her life.

As if all of this wasn't enough, she also served as co-chair of the Illinois Gay

and Lesbian Task Force, co-chair of the first Oak Park Cultural Arts Festival, producer of the Left Bank Culture Club concerts, and school board member of St. Catherine-St. Lucy.



It was with the thoughts of her persistent dedication that we felt there was no other option than to memorialize a woman with these outstanding qualities. We, friends of Carol Zientek, have established a memorial fund to continue the work that Carol began in her lifetime, and OPALGA has agreed to provide fiscal administration of this fund. The goal of the

Carol Zientek Memorial Fund is to keep alive the vision that Carol worked toward in her lifetime. The funds that we raise will be used for any or all of the following:

- o the Oak Park Cultural Arts Festival
- o the OPALGA library
- o a gay and lesbian youth group

o a senior citizen gay and lesbian group Cultural arts, literature, youth and senior citizens - these were Carol's loves and passions.

Please help us to continue Carol's visions by contributing to the Carol Zientek Memorial Fund. Please use the attached form, and mail your check in the enclosed envelope. Please make your check payable to OPALGA, and write "Carol Zientek Fund" on the memo line of the check.

Thank you from the Carol Zientek Memorial Fund Committee.

Mary Davis
Mel Wilson
Rob Ward
Carole Goodwin



The Carol Zientek Memorial Fund

Yes, I want to contribute to the Carol Zientek Memorial Fund:

- \$100.00
 \$50.00
 \$25.00
 Other _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Please make check payable to: OPALGA and write "Carol Zientek Fund" in the memo line on the check. Or to pay be credit card, phone OPALGA and provide the following information: Credit Card, Card Number, Expiration Date, Name as it appears on the card.

Prism Youth Network

Drop-In Center

Serving 14-20-year-old youth. Meets every Thursday, 6:30-9 pm at OPALGA offices, 1145 Westgate, Suite 106, Oak Park, Illinois

Info-Line: 708.FUN.FIND

Information and service referrals sensitive to minority youth and their families

Advocacy

Contact: Vivian O'Dell or Rob Ward at 708.386.3463

Musings About Matthew

Joyce Daley

Almost 30 years ago the NYC police raided a gay bar. That wasn't news. They did it all the time in NYC. And Chicago. And every city big enough to have a gay bar. What made the news was that this time everyone roused out of the bar decided that they had enough.

This time they were going to fight back. The bar was called The Stonewall, a name that became a rallying cry. The resistance made a difference. Ask anyone old enough to have been out in the bars back then and they will tell you how things have changed. Although no longer a rallying cry, Stonewall is still important. It is a potent symbol of a pivotal moment in gay and lesbian history.

Recently, something else happened to bring the gay and lesbian community to

its feet; the brutal murder of Matthew Shepard. We aren't strangers to the cold fact of hate crimes. We read about them too often. Some of our closest friends have been victims. Too many of us have personally been victims. But this time the sheer brutality and viciousness of Matthew's murder propelled us into the streets again. This time we weren't alone. Many in the straight community were shocked and outraged enough to join us.

We marched, we prayed, we lit candles, and we cried. By now the candles have been extinguished and the tears dried. We can't let our outrage and resolve to force change to die. Because if we do, we do Matthew the greatest dishonor.

If you aren't sure what you can do, see page 9 for suggestions.

Memorial

(cont. from page 1)

Crimes investigator for the Cook County State's Attorney's office; Rev. Margarita Suarez, Pastor of Pilgrim Congregational Church; and thank you to Tim Lenihan, pianist.

Remember!



Matthew
Shepard
1976-1998

Matthew Shepard: speech from Memorial

Julie A. Kreiner

An act of brutal, senseless violence against one individual has brought us all together tonight. The death of Matthew Shepard has brought the cold reality of hate crimes out into the light. In 1997, there were 2,445 episodes of gay and lesbian hate crimes committed in 14 cities.¹ In 1997, even heterosexuals who were *perceived* to be gay were victimized 36% more than in 1996.² No person is safe from a hate crime.

Yet the vast majority of victims of anti-lesbian/gay violence, 80%, never report the incident.³ Students who describe themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered are *five times* more likely to miss school because of feeling unsafe.⁴ 75% of people committing these hate crimes are under age 30. One in three is under 18.⁵

One of the reasons I am here tonight, is for my nieces and nephews. They will be living in the future we're creating now. As our community comes together tonight, let's remember all victims of hate. Let our march tonight remind all people that hate will not be tolerated against anyone, against any group. We are all in this together. Whether it be lesbian or gay hate crimes, racially motivated hate crimes,

crimes against people because of their religion, or crimes against women.

Women, as a "class", are not even covered by the Hate Crimes Statistics Act. There are no federal government surveys of hate crimes against women. Yet approximately 683,000 women are raped each year.⁶

For our own future, our own children, nieces, nephews, friends, let us stop this hate. Let us show them we, whether we're homosexual or heterosexual; whether we're black, white, hispanic, or asian; whether we're Jewish, Protestant, or Catholic, or whether we're female or male; we all refuse to tolerate hate crimes.

A couple of years ago, one Jewish family was terrorized in Billings, Montana. The community stood together. They placed Menorahs, the local newspaper had printed, and placed them in their windows to protest the violence against members in their own community. The violence stopped.

Though this prejudice and violence sometimes feels limitless, it is learned. It has a beginning, there can be an end. Hate is trained into a person. Together, inch by inch, step by step, we will work together

to change the laws, together we will work towards teaching understanding and tolerance. Let's give future generations something more important than having to fight hate among each other.

As Martin Luther King said, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

Let the light of knowledge that Matthew Shepard's death brought to us, lead us and give us strength to continue to work against this darkness of ignorance, this darkness of hate.

Always remember. Never forget.

1. "Anti-Lesbian/Gay Violence in 1997," National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 1998.

2. Ibid.

3. New York Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project Annual Report, 1996.

4. National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, "Anti-Gay/Lesbian Victimization," New York, 1984.

5. New York Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Report, 1996.

6. National Crime Victims Treatment Center, Rape in America 2 (1992).

Matthew Shepard: What you can do

¥ Write your congressperson/senator and ask them to:
 a) Support the Hate Crimes Prevention Act
 b) Pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Bill (ENDA)

Send letters/email to:

Senators: Carol Moseley-Braun and/or
 Richard Durbin
 The Senate of the United States,
 Washington, DC

20510

braun.senate.gov

Oak Park/River Forest/Berwyn
 Representatives: 3rd District
 4th District
 7th District

William O. Lipinski
 Luis V. Gutierrez
 Danny K. Davis
 U.S. House of Representatives,
 Washington, DC 20515
 email: luisg@hr.house.gov
 danny.davi@mail.house.gov

¥ Contact our state-elected officials and urge them to pass a
 state-wide non-discrimination bill which includes gays and
 lesbians.

Send letters/email to:
 Governor:

James Edgar
 207 State House, Room 207,

Springfield, IL 62706
 email: gov@accessil.com

Oak Park/River Forest/Berwyn

State Senators: 4th District Earlean Collins
 22nd District Thomas Walsh
 39h District Daniel J. Cronin
 State House, Springfield, IL

62706

State Reps: 7th District Eugene Moore
 8th District Calvin Giles
 44th District James B. Durkin
 77th District Angelo Saviano
 Stratton Building, Springfield, IL
 62706

¥ Send a message of condolence or donation to Matt Shepard's
 family.

Cards

The Shepard Family
 c/o Poudre Valley Hospital
 1024 S. Lemay Ave.
 Fort Collins, CO 80524

email: mshepard@libra.pvh.org

Donations

Fund for the Benefit of
 Matthew Shepard
 c/o First National Bank
 PO Box 578
 Fort Collins, CO 80522
 Account No. 1926083

¥ Report any manner of Hate Crime/Abuse to:

Local: Sgt. Geoff Sjoström

OPALGA and Friends Participate in Names Project Opening Ceremonies

Ray Johnson

On Saturday, November 28th, the Chicago Chapter of The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt unveiled the largest display of the AIDS Quilt ever exhibited under one roof. More than 6,000 individually created panels, only 1/7th of the entire quilt, filled Festival Hall at Navy Pier for the four-day exhibition, which culminated with observance of World AIDS Day on December 1st.

More than 250,000 visitors went to the Pier and experienced the quilt. The quilt, in its entirety, consists of more than 45,000 panels, each serving as a memorial to a partner, child, parent, sibling, friend, teacher or neighbor whose life has been cut short by the AIDS epidemic.

OPALGA and friends were an official unfolding team that

participated in opening ceremonies and the unfolding of four 24' x 24' sections of the quilt. The team consisted of eight members, dressed in the white attire as requested by the NAMES Project. Team members from left to right back row were: Sam Halferty, Bob

Horton, Jim Sims, Dean Fowls. Front row: Jim Perry, Pilar Thomas, Ray Johnson, Jeff Weber.



As the unfolding proceeded, the OPALGA team was filmed for possible inclusion in a documentary about the quilt that the NAMES project is producing.

Joining many organizations in the Chicagoland area at the unfolding ceremonies, were performances by the Windy City Chorus and Chicago Gay Mens Chorus.

Pastor Gets Busted for Conducting Gay Wedding

Merle Shapera

A prominent Chicago Methodist pastor, Rev. Greg Dell, who conducted a marriage ceremony for two gay men in September faces a church trial that could cost him his job. The case is the first test of a new church law that was passed on August 11, 1998, when the supreme court of the 8.5 million member United Methodist Church denomination ruled to ban gay marriage. That ruling followed a church trial in Nebraska that narrowly acquitted Rev. Jimmy Creech of violating church law by uniting a lesbian couple. Creech has now resigned from his congregation, which subsequently, split. And also in the aftermath of this trial and later ruling, Methodists have both protested through withholding of money from their churches or broken away altogether.

The Reverend Dell has long supported the rights of inclusion of gays and lesbians in the church. He served as minister to Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church in Oak Park when the church began its efforts toward becoming a reconciling parish. "It's preposterous to tell gays and lesbians they are welcome in the church but to leave their love at the door." He believes his ordination vow to minister to all people supersedes the Methodist ban on homosexual unions.

Dell believes that his case will turn on interpretation of a passage in the United Methodist "Book of Discipline" which states that ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by their pastors nor conducted in their churches. This passage doesn't allow for much pastoral leeway, as it rules out any

possibility of performing gay weddings outside church property, a practice often performed in the past by many church leaders of varying denominations. Creech's acquittal prompted the Judicial Council to review the passage and determine it to be a binding law.

The Broadway United Methodist Church has already begun raising funds for Dell's defense, as well as seeking letters of support. Contributions can be sent to his current church at 3344 N. Broadway, Chicago, IL 60657. Letters of support should be mailed or faxed to Bishop Joseph Sprague at 77 W. Washington Suite 1820, Chicago, IL 60602. Fax 312/346-9760.

It is hoped that the letters of support will demonstrate the variety and diversity of support Reverend Dell enjoys. If you choose to send such a letter, please share as much of yourself and why you support him as you feel comfortable doing. If you have a connection to Broadway Methodist Church, mention it. It is important to explain why it matters to you that the Church extend ministry to all people. Whatever you decide to do, please send/fax a copy directly to the Church at this address:

Broadway United Methodist Church
 Attention: Letters
 3344 N. Broadway
 Chicago, IL 60657
 Fax: 312/348-2521

Reverend Dell Fundraiser

Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church will sponsor a fund raiser for the defense of Rev. Gregory Dell on Sunday, January 10, 1999, 3-5 pm.

The Variety Show will feature Master or Ceremonies- Allen Amberg of LesBiGay Radio, Door Prizes, Acts from Euclid's Broadway Show, Windy City Slickers, and Improv. Acts

Tickets are \$12 advance. \$15 at the door Send check payable to Broadway

Justice Fund with self addressed stamped envelope to:

Tickets
 Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church
 405 S. Euclid Ave.
 Oak Park, IL 60302

For more information contact Event Chairperson: Pauline S. Geary, 708-383-0391 or 708-861-6322.

Metropolitan Community Church of the Incarnation

460 Lake Street
 Oak Park, IL 60302
 708.383.3033

Rev. Bradley E. Mickelson, Pastor

Service: Sunday 11 AM
 in Chapel of Pilgrim Congregational Church

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 email: tantrvl@aol.com

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 Oak Park, Illinois 60302



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 125 marion street, oak park 708.386.9194

Attention: Subscribers

In an attempt to cut costs but still provide quality communications, we are planning to eliminate the envelope in future Bulletin mailings. The Bulletin will be folded in half and stapled. The back page will be the only thing visible. One half of the page will be used for postage, mailing label, and space for our return address only. The organization name will not be used. The other half of the page will have

simple, non-identifying graphics, and possible advertisements for local churches. Nothing threatening. Be assured that we have given this much thought; to address our need to curb costs and the need of those of you not "out" for privacy. We think this will work. If for any reason you are adamant about receiving your mailing in an envelope, it is absolutely imperative that you contact Joyce Daley, OPALGA

Office Manager at 848-0273 and follow up in writing. If we receive notice from you, we will hold your mailing aside and mail it later in an envelope. Please give this as much thought as we have. If too many people decide on an envelope, this obviously won't work and we will need to look for other ways to cut costs.

Gift Ideas: OPALGA Shopping Network

Attention OPALGA Shoppers! Looking for that perfect last minute gift for a special someone? A new neighbor? A friend or relative?

Why not purchase an OPALGA "gift" membership? This will be the gift that keeps giving all year! Help spread the word about the activities of the largest lesbian and gay community organization in Illinois, through the receipt of the

quarterly "OPALGA Bulletin" and our monthly "OPALGA News" calendar of events. Keep your friends and neighbors posted on the latest community news, events, and exciting opportunities to get involved.

So fill that stocking with this edition of the OPALGA Bulletin as a friendly notice for the special someone in your life. OPALGA will also mail an acknowledge-

ment of your gift to you and your gift recipient! And don't forget to send in your membership dues for 1999. We must be strong in numbers, voices, and dollars.

Fill out the membership form in the back of the bulletin and complete the appropriate gift membership section. We'll do the rest and your shopping will be done!

Happy Holidays and Thank You!

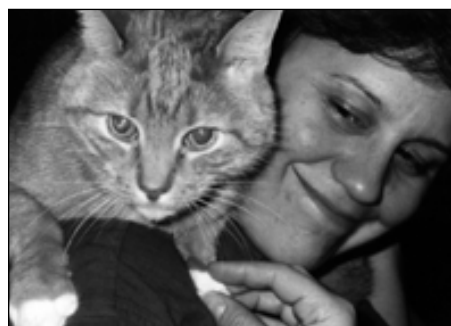
Fundraising Fundamentals

Have a project in mind but can't figure out how to get it funded? We have limited amounts of money in our own budget, but two members of the Fundraising Committee are prepared to write grant proposals to support programs that meet the criteria that foundations are looking for. As an example, the Rainbow Card has established a foundation the funds programs that pay particular attention to

lesbian and gay youth, elders, people of color, and families; promote awareness of gay and lesbian mental and physical health issues; create links between national efforts and state or local organizations; and/or promote coalitions that work to strengthen advocacy efforts and protect lesbian and gay rights. If you want to develop a program that falls into those categories, let us know, and we'll work

with you to get the proposal in the by deadline. Time is short; the next round of proposals for the Rainbow Foundation is due the third Friday in January; after that you'd have to wait until the third Friday in June. We need to hear from you SOON to meet these dates. Call Jim Kelly at 708.524.2542, or Helen Bishop at 708.771.4673, and let's talk!

Volunteer of the Quarter



Any organization like OPALGA depends on volunteers to keep things ticking along, help existing programs thrive and develop new ones, and welcome both long-time and new members. Julie A. Kreiner has

played a key role in all these areas of OPALGA's life. We met Julie through all her work with the "Vote Yes" Registry Referendum. There, she was the graphic designer and PR person. Julie used her graphic design skills for the fliers and invitations for last year's fundraising dinner, the OPALGA. Everything we mailed out had Julie's fingerprints all over it, both literally and figuratively. In addition, Julie, who is known professionally as the person behind JAK Graphic Solutions, has helped to get our office online and brought Joyce Daley, our office manager, up to speed on the computer. You're looking at Julie's skills in layout and design as you read this very bulletin.

Not content with these contributions, she handles our press releases and graphic design for our activities (such as the Matthew Shepard Commemoration), and Julie will be serving with Ray Johnson as co-chair on the committee planning our annual GALA, and on the board. Her calm, patient demeanor conceals a fierce loyalty to OPALGA; her tireless efforts have moved us along toward our goal of presenting our organization well in Oak Park and surrounding communities. We wouldn't be where we are without people like Julie - next time you see her at a potluck, parade, committee meeting or social event, say "Hi!"

Thanks a million, Julie, for all you do.

OPALGA Membership Form

Domestic partner/families may join together.

New Member/s? Yes No Gift Membership? Yes No DATE: _____

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

Address: _____ City/ST/ZIP _____

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

For Gift Membership acknowledgement, please provide your name(s):

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: \$** _____

If paying by credit card please fill out information below:

Card (Visa,MC,Discover) _____ Name as it appears on card _____
 Expiration Date: _____ / _____ Card #: _____
 Phone (daytime/evening): _____
 Authorizing signature: _____

Please return this form to: OPALGA, 1145 Westgate, Suite 106, Oak Park, Illinois 60301 / 708.848.0273

Thank you, and don't forget all contributions are tax-deductible by law, less \$5 for the cost of producing the monthly newsletter and quarterly bulletin. OPALGA is an IRS 501(c)3 tax-exempt non-profit organization.

Advertising Space

Advertising space is available in the OPALGA monthly Newsletter at a charge of \$30 for 3 ads, \$60 for 6, \$90 for 9, and \$120 for 12 (size is roughly a business card). Annual subscribers receive free placement in the quarterly Bulletin. For larger ad sizes and other information, please call Joyce Daley at the OPALGA office: 708.848.0273