A time for political action

By Marsha J. Langford

Feminists were shocked by a study done a more than a decade into the most strident part of the women's equality movement, which asked little boys and little girls, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

They gave precisely the same answers that little boys and little girls have been giving since Adam and Eve popped the question to Cain and Abel as they were about to enter Eden Street Grammar School.

In other words, the little boys responded that they wanted to be firemen, senators, doctors, lawyers and captains of industry — people in positions of power.

The little girls responded that they wanted to be housewives, mommies, nurses, secretaries, teachers and somebody's assistant — people in subordinate positions.

When pressed on the issue and asked if they would like to become nuclear physicists, or astronauts, or other non-traditional professionals, the little girls giggled and blushed and were unable to respond.

The reason that feminists were so alarmed by the little girls' response is because of this axiom:

Whenever individuals limit their imaginations, they give up their personal power. And when they give up their personal power, they give up their self-esteem.

This principle holds true for all oppressed people. Until every black child can imagine that he or she can...

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On “being political”

By Lin Ennis

In a landmark ruling favoring gays and lesbians (a $3,000,000 anti-gay discrimination class action suit against Pacific Bell, which, with legal fees, etc. is projected to cost Pac Bell $5,000,000), the California Supreme court, May 31, 1979, said gays and lesbians are protected by California Labor Code which outlaws discrimination based on politics. The judges interpreted coming out as the most political act a person can perform.

Why should we argue with the California Supreme court? California is clearly one of the best places in the United States for gays and lesbians to live, and the state government says coming out — telling people we are homosexual — is the most political statement we can make. That is why we demonstrated in front of the General Conference Headquarters demanding support for AIDS/ARC treatment in the Adventist Health System October 9th, 1987, and demanding that the church quit supporting change ministries in general and Colin Cook in particular. And that is why we marched on the Capitol on the 11th with $50,000 other gays and lesbians to demand legal recognition as full citizens and human rights in general (passage of the ERA).

But why make political statements at all?

The answer is: we need to. We need not only to change the world, but also to strengthen ourselves.

Political action is self-affirming. It is a means of constructive defense against a destructive system. When an organization obstructs the freedom of individuals to participate in privileges afforded those all around them, the oppressed people experience an atrophy of self that feels like dying without extinction.

Self-preservation demands fleeing or changing the system. Fleeing sometimes has its own unfortunate consequence of a protected pride that isn’t quite as proud as it might have been had it won rather than run. Changing the tyrant, on the other hand, or trying to, insists that the self was right all along, and is at least equal to the opponent, if not more righteous. But that’s not all.

Political action is cathartic. Fighting with those who insist that we are not all equal, whether unequal by creation or immigration or genderation or alteration, provides us with focus for our collective rage. Perhaps we felt undeserving of equality at some previous time, but now we have decided we are fine people. We meet others like us, if the oppression relaxes enough to let us find them, and we meet pain. That pain makes our own numbness turn to sorrow, and our sympathy for our friend turn to anger. Our faintly glowing embers spark cooperative fires that warm us, then cleanse us. Our blaze enlightens others.

Political action does work. It does make living easier for the next generation. They will not have to fight the battles we have fought. But there will still be conflict, as long as the need to prevail survives in human consciousness, as long as there is tyranny of any degree and a lust for freedom that will not relinquish the self.

Political action is not just for future generations’ ease. It is the signet of the sacredness of our own individuality. It is love in walking shoes, anger in overalls, passion at a typewriter. It is our statement that we are worthwhile, that we are clean, that we are whole. It is our defense of our life and our work and our right to love and to our essence. It is our discontent with meanness and our optimism for the future. Political action is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, without which they will never be seen.
Looking at AIDS from a Christian perspective dictates a positive and action-oriented response to victims of the disease.

By Fritz Guy

Theology is thinking about the meaning of religious faith. Because religious faith relates to all of human existence or experience, so does theology. Often it is useful to "think theologically" about all sorts of things — that is, to relate the meaning of religious faith to an understanding of nature, science, medicine, education, sports, sex — whatever. In a Christian context, a theology of AIDS must focus on at least these three ideas:

- AIDS is not God's will for anyone;
- AIDS provides an opportunity for Christian service;
- AIDS is not the final word about the patient.

Let me try to unpack these ideas very briefly.

AIDS is not God's will for anyone.

AIDS is not punishment for sin ("divine retribution"). The disease results from a series of natural processes. Even if someone regards intravenous drug abuse or homosexual activity as sinful, the fact remains that such activity is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the occurrence of AIDS.

Christians hold the basic conviction that the best clue to the character and activity of God comes from the teachings and actions of Jesus of Nazareth. When some friends of Jesus asked about a particular victim of disease, "Who sinned, this man or his parents?" Jesus answered, "Neither."
The mistake made by Jesus' friends was the assumption of a direct, cause-and-effect connection between one's moral choices and one's circumstances. Jesus pointed out that reality isn't that simple. In the case of AIDS, this kind of mistake is probably a response to (and rationalization of) two universal human problems.

On one hand, there is our personal fear and anxiety. AIDS represents two aspects of human reality that often make people rather uncomfortable: sexuality and death. (This anxiety, by the way, seems to be as typical of physicians, nurses and hospital chaplains as it is of the rest of humanity.)

On the other hand, human pride, or self-righteousness, maintains a convenient hierarchy of vices. These self-righteous people often consider some sins, especially sexual ones, disreputable, while they consider other sins, especially attitudinal ones, insignificant.

According to Jesus, the truth of the matter is quite different: the blatantly unrighteous have the possibility of acceptance and forgiveness and an eternal future; but the smugly self-righteous have no future at all.

AIDS provides an opportunity for Christian service.

Both the terror and hopelessness give AIDS a special claim on Christian attention and concern.

Jesus of Nazareth is not only our best clue to the character and activity of God, but also our best clue to the meaning and fulfillment of humanness. In what Jesus said and was, we see what it means to be truly human.

He said, for example, "Do for others what you would want them to do for you." And when he met the victims of leprosy (which was for his time and place what AIDS is for us), he listened to them, talked to them, touched them, healed them. When he was criticized for being too friendly with disreputable persons he said that the reason he cared about them was that God cared about them.

Jesus made it clear that humanness is fulfilled in giving, serving, helping. When he was talking about the ultimate meaning of human existence, he described a scene in which the Sovereign of all reality said to some people, "I was sick and you looked after me," and to others, "I was sick and you didn't look after me." To take the religion of Jesus seriously is to respond to human need.

The kind of service Jesus was talking about has two important characteristics. Service is performed without regard to the "worth" of those served: he washed the feet of Judas. And it was done without regard to self-interest: he was most interested in people who couldn't possibly return the favor. This, of course, is what God is and does: God gives God's self for the benefit of the unworthy. This is the meaning of agape; this is the "good news."

And this is the kind of opportunity we have in relation to persons with AIDS. Unless their situation is unusual or an immediate cure is found, they can never pay us back. They will not again be "productive members of society."

Please turn to page five
someday be the president of the United States, every black child will suffer from the absence of personal power and be crippled by low self-esteem. Until every Hispanic woman or American Indian man can envision themselves as equal candidates for jobs that wield both position and power, all Hispanic women and American Indian men will suffer from a malignancy of spirit that does permanent damage to the soul.

As gay men and lesbians, until we can conceive of ourselves in every possible employment situation, as fully franchised representatives of God and government and industry; living openly and without apology for our difference, neither giggling nor blushing nor being unable to respond to the idea that we can be anything our abilities will allow us to be; then we too give up our personal power and abandon our self-esteem. In doing so, we play into our own oppression.

It is from this idea that we conceive a second axiom:

"The very least we can do is to decline to participate in our own oppression."

With these two axioms in mind, we can begin to formulate our response to the Church (or government, or family, or society as a whole).

The roots of homophobia run so deep, and the arguments about the nature of homosexuality are so skewed with emotionalism and ignorance, that gay men and lesbians often are willing to accept the most meager of crumbs from the Church instead of rising up in moral outrage and condemning the Church for its most unchristian, Nazi-like behavior toward a group of people whose "sin" is very simply that we deviate from some antiquated and incorrect notion of being that the Adventist Church still clings to.

Recently, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists agreed to allow one of our most ardent supporters to run a "hotline" for the parents of gay men and lesbians. Some people are thrilled by this breakthrough and believe that we should take a softer tack with the Church, including aborting our planned demonstration on the General Conference just prior to the March on Washington on October 11, 1987.

As gay men and lesbians, until we can conceive of ourselves in every possible employment situation, as fully franchised representatives of God and government and industry; living openly and without apology for our difference... then WE TOO give up our personal power and abandon our self-esteem. In doing so, we play into our own oppression.

""

GC has made this infinitesimal step forward, it continues to regard gay men and lesbians with arrogance and condescension, providing "ministries" for us that include the likes of Quest and Colin Cook; setting up committees, such as the 15 member panel recently formed to study the Church's response to the AIDS crises, that include neither a single self-affirming gay man or lesbian, nor a single Kinship member; and capriciously establishing negative doctrine about homosexuality without regard for its impact upon the innocent, or for its alignment with established fact.

Experience has demonstrated to us that conciliatory behavior and gentle attempts at education are ineffective on individuals who are more invested in perpetuating their own conclusions and agendas than they are in finding the truth. It makes as much sense for gay men and lesbians to continue to attempt to provide gentle, rational instruction to the closed-minded Church as it does to try to show a robber with a cocked gun the error of his ways, or to thank him for not shooting you after he has made off with your wallet.

Our decision to reclaim our power and thus our self-esteem requires us to develop a list of baseline requirements to present to the Seventh-day Adventist Church regarding their treatment of gay men and lesbians. Such a list might include the following:

☐ Disband Quest, Homosexuals Anonymous (HA) and other "change ministries," and provide restitution to individuals who have suffered at the hands of Colin Cook and HA.

☐ Establish an ongoing dialogue with Kinship and other homophile organizations.

☐ Establish AIDS-related services for
homosexuals provided by homosexuals.

- Provide training and guidance to Adventist pastors and health workers on providing services to gay men and lesbians.
- Conduct gay and lesbian marriage ceremonies.
- Ordain gay men and lesbians.

Our commitment to stop participating in our own oppression might include these items:

- Refuse to tithe except to Kinship (an important step).
- Refuse to accept half measures.
- Persist doggedly in reassessing the Church's policies and behaviors.
- File lawsuits when possible.

Needless to say, the fulfillment of human rights objectives for gay men and lesbians within the Adventist Church will neither be fast, nor easy. Ultimately many may have to make the decision to leave the Church altogether; many may come to the conclusion that the Adventist Church's doctrine on homosexuality is so unsoundly wrought as to raise questions about the rest of the Church's teaching.

However painful the journey may be, enlightened individuals know that the persistent quest for truth and personal wholeness is essential to spiritual survival whether within or without the Church, and must transcend constraints on thought imposed by the Church.

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**Theological Reflections About AIDS**

**Continued from page three**

They will not donate a small fortune to fund medical research; they often will not even pay their own medical bills. Those who are not already Christian will probably not be converted. But they are all sick, and they need to be cared for.

There are many ways to care. One possibility is personal interaction: investing time and interest, being present and listening. Another possibility is the establishment of structures of care—such as volunteer organizations and hospices like the one established by Mother Theresa in New York—to make sure that patients are cared for.

Still another possibility is encouraging public policy makers to address the public need. There needs to be massive public funding, not only for research but also for care. As the number of cases increases and the costs soar we need broad AIDS education in public and private schools and in the various information media. Such things are more likely to happen if there is vigorous and persistent communication with legislators and other public officials, and if there is discussion in public forums like letters to editors and talk shows.

We can let people know that AIDS patients must be cared for, even if it means, as it surely will, loss of money for ourselves because of higher taxes and insurance premiums.

AIDS is not the final word about a patient.

AIDS is a terrible, tragic word, but it is not the last word. Jesus of Nazareth is the best clue to the meaning of human existence and everything it contains. For him, suffering and death were not the last word. The last word was victory over suffering and death. As of now, AIDS is fatal. But the patient as a person can be healed in the way that matters most (I do not say this glibly, but very deliberately). Typically the patient feels abandoned by family and friends. If the patient is homosexual, he or she already feels rejected by society in general. And this feeling may be internalized as guilt not only because of what that person does, but because of what that person is. In this state of abandonment and guilt, there is no good medical news, no prospect of a cure, not even hope of a miracle.

But there is the possibility of love and acceptance, mediated by persons who are willing to care. This is even more important than extending the patient’s life. And for this we will need people. We will need personnel for whom caring is not only a professional function but also a personal ministry. We will also need an army of volunteers who will invest themselves in terms of their presence.

AIDS challenges us to live our theology. ▲

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The Reverend Marsha J. Langford is a minister who has been active in the lesbian and gay religious movement for about eight years.

Fritz Guy is an associate minister at the Loma Linda University Church, Loma Linda, CA. This article on the theology of AIDS first appeared in UPDATE, a publication of the Ethics Center at Loma Linda University's Division of Religion.

Kinship Connection, November 1987 5
A recap of the MARCH

By Lin Ennis

Demonstration at the GC

A peaceful protest was held outside the General Conference building in Takoma Park, MD on Friday, October 9. Kinship members carried posters addressing two topics: the Adventist Health Systems' paltry response to the AIDS crisis, and the Church's continued support of Colin Cook and change ministries.

Several hundred flyers outlining our concerns over these two matters were passed out as "An Open Letter to Our Church" drafted by Lee Standford.

Fall Council was taking place in the Takoma Park Church across the street from the GC, and the Adventist Women's Association Annual Conference and the Voice of Prophecy Day were also occurring over the weekend in D.C.

Although no altercations occurred, the police were summoned by Church representatives on four separate occasions. After assuring themselves that we were proceeding in a legal and appropriate fashion, the police offered some

"It's making me feel very high since I came out of my way to be here — I'm from San Francisco. I'm completely out everywhere, including to my parents who are Adventist, and they completely accept me and share in my life."

— Marcus Becker
suggestions and their protection should we need it.

Although we received no official response from the Church, we had meaningful conversations with a number of people and received an enthusiastic response from the general community.

The March

Kinship members participated in one of the largest civil rights demonstrations in history in front of the Capitol building on Sunday, October 11.

Approximately 25 of us joined with an estimated 1/2 to 3/4 of a million others in showing our presence to government as a people to be reckoned with, demanding equal rights for all.

Many people in the crowd identified themselves to us as Adventists. It looks like we also did a lot of outreach for Region 2! ▲

“I haven’t done anything like this before — it’s exciting.”
—Steve Ramirez
A unique infusion of womyn-only energy creates an unforgettable experience.

By Gwenda Green

K

inship Kampmeeting aside, Michigan Womyn's Music Festival was a highlight of the five weeks my lover, Jane, and I spent in the States over the past summer.

The Michigan festival, set in 600 acres of woodland 90 miles from Grand Rapids, represents the largest community of womyn in the world. This year 7,000 womyn (previously as many as 10,000) traveled to "the land" to share in the expression of their dreams and values through workshops and concerts, and to live together for five days in this self-created village of womyn-only energy.

Jan, whom we had met at Kampmeeting, met us at the airport and took us to the festival. After the rather lengthy process of registration, which included a short video about what to expect, and signing up for obligatory work shifts of four hours, we were bused into the heart of "the land." Arriving so late at night we couldn't put up our tent, we slept the first night in the exercise tent of the DART campers. (That's an area designated for differently-abled womyn with special needs).

Next morning we awoke eager to experience "Michigan." Jane's enthusiasm was a little dampened by her mid-morning cold shower in the open-air shower banks, but she survived, and we sat down to our granola, yoghurt and scrambled tofu breakfast, and studied the 80 page programme.

How does one choose from up to sixteen workshops occurring simultaneously as well as ongoing performances at the Day Stage and Acoustic Stage? For example: my choices for Thursday at 3 p.m. were Holly Near talking informally; Diane Stein's workshop on "Healing Womyn and the Earth," and a showing of the new lesbian soap opera "Two and Twenty." I couldn't decide, so I went to some of each. Not the most satisfying solution, but at least I got to see Holly, Diane and the film!

Each day saw us racing from workshop to workshop, concert to concert, and in between, checking out the Crafts/Womyn's Bazaar where 150 Womyn's businesses showed their womyn-made products. During the day there was always a variety of fruit and whole grain breads available. The evening meals were equally healthy—salads, tabouli, corn and vegetarian entrees, etc. In fact, no meat or dairy products, except yoghurt, were served. I felt really at home as I could eat the kind of food I'm used to. I also liked the designated chem-free areas for camping, workshops and concerts.

I think that the performer whom we were most excited by was Heather Bishop, a Canadian performer. We bought her four records, which we have been playing non-stop in our home. (Well, interspersed between Romanouskv & Phillips and Judy Fjell, who have also become favorites for us.)

Other highlights of the festival were Alix Dobkin, Rhiannon and Carrie Barton—all performers that Jane will be trying to get to perform in Australia.

We felt tremendously empowered by this infusion of womyn energy. There was an atmosphere of excitement and lots of good fun and sharing of humor, despite the continuous heavy rains that beset the festival during the last four days. Still, we wouldn't have missed the experience for anything!

The highlight of the Festival was the Saturday night concert. The rain stopped and the audience was electric as Holly Near and her band exploded with a vitality and a sensitivity which takes the music of her new album to a new level of excellence in Womyn's music.

If Michigan was the perfect ending to our holiday, then Kampmeeting was the perfect beginning! We wouldn't have missed it for anything! It marked a very important occasion in our lives as a couple and we will always cherish not just our memories (and photos) but each one of you who have become part of our lives. 

Gwenda Green is the Connection's Australian correspondent. She writes — "Already, as I discuss the possibility of returning to New Hampshire to lecture for three weeks in July-August 1988, (which would fit in with Kampmeeting 1988), Jane is saying, "But you can't go without me. I really want to go to see everyone too!"
Coming Out, coming home

By Jerry Cheney

Growing up and coming to terms with my sexual identity was not easy since my father is an Adventist minister with a conservative ideological bent.

I did have several close, non-sexual friendships. I felt some inner stirrings of sexual attraction toward my friends — stimulated by frequent skinny-dipping — but I kept those feelings secret aside from one brief “fooling around” encounter. However, we frequently discussed masturbation, and we felt awful after we were informed that Ellen White associated the practice with all manner of evil. In fact, one friend considered suicide after a confrontation with his father over the issue.

During academy, I had no relationships with other guys. Perhaps my lack of friends was my way of compensating for my inner turmoil and anxiety over occasional snide remarks about me — I was a failure at sports; was active in music and spiritual activities, and considered a bit square. Meanwhile, my fantasy life about sex with men flourished. It was during this part of my life that my reading and study in the area of sexuality and psychology brought about some major disagreements with my upbringing.

When I began my fall term at AUC, I met some gay students in the dorm and hung out with them a bit, and even went with them to a gay bar. Two events ended this exploring.

I began rooming with one of the gay students and we had a brief fling. He went off on break, came back with mono and left AUC. The second “trauma” occurred when I learned that another student who had left after the first semester had killed himself by asphyxiation. He left the car running in the garage and had taken a parent with him as the door to the house was open.

His parent had nodded off while sitting at the kitchen table.

Needless to say, I ran back into the closet and slammed the door! I became very active on campus — becoming

Name:
Jerry Cheney
Label:
Gay man
Age:
31 (as of 8/24/87)
Occupation:
Residential Counselor — multiply handicapped
Relationship:
Searching
Graduate of:
Pine Tree Academy and Atlantic Union College
Religion:
Unitarian Universalist (former SDA)
Out to:
Sister and brother-in-law, straight roommate, fellow employees, U.U. Church members and pastor, some long-time friends. He recently came out to his parents as well.

S.A. senator, Director of S.P.R.A.Y. (recreation program for area youth), Resident Assistant in dorm, singing in groups and spending two tours of duty as a student missionary (one year on Borneo in Indonesia and six months in a refugee camp in Thailand). While overseas I noticed and grew to appreciate the male-to-male closeness. My interest was also aroused when I observed two men who were rumored to have a “thing” going.

When I finished college, I went to work for three years with disturbed youth and continued to keep my identity secret; although, I began to frequent book stores and read about gay issues.

Then good fortune led me to work as a Residential Counselor with retarded and blind/deaf adults. The agency was quite progressive and had an openly gay employee in an important position. I seriously began to explore the possibility of coming out.

About this same time I joined the local Unitarian Universalist Church (after a long search for a religion that made sense to me). I came out to the pastor and he helped me sort things out. I ventured back to the bar scene and who should I meet but an old friend from college and summer camp. We chatted some and I began to feel at home.

Since then I have established lots of friendships and am searching for someone with whom to share a deeper commitment. I am slowly becoming involved in the gay community and am starting a Worcester area group for gay and lesbian Unitarian Universalists.

I have the full backing of the minister and the Social Action Committee. I can’t help but wonder what the SDA Church’s response would have been.

Part of coming to terms with myself inspires me to improve myself by losing weight — 60 pounds to date. It’s been a long road but I feel I’m finally home.
Ignorance is embarrassing

Insensitivity and prejudice, or awkwardness and fear?

By Marie Crofoot

A blind woman goes into a restaurant with a sighted companion. The waitress speaks only to the companion, as if the blind woman also could not hear. A man whose speech is impaired by cerebral palsy finds that people treat him as if he is retarded. A wheelchair user is suddenly "helped" down the sidewalk by a well-meaning passer-by who doesn't realize the woman would rather wheel herself.

Why is it that we sometimes don't respond properly to people whose abilities differ from ours? Is it that we are prejudiced? Are we merely insensitive boors? I don't think so. Most often, we are just ignorant, and maybe a little bit afraid.

We tend to want others to be like us — to walk like us, talk like us, and have the same abilities that we do. When we encounter people who don't quite fit that image, we may feel unsure about how to relate to them. We may want to help, yet feel helpless. We may think about how we would feel with that disability, and allow our own fears to prevent us from dealing with that person. We may find it easier to avoid disabled people, so that we avoid our own feelings of discomfort and awkwardness.

It would be wonderful if we could just stop feeling uncomfortable around people who are different, if we could always take it in stride when we meet a person without legs, or someone who is blind. But it doesn't always work that way. That's OK. That's part of being human.

What we can do is take time to get to know the person, ask questions, and even admit our discomfort. Don't be afraid to ask, "Why do you use a wheelchair?" or "Have you always been blind?" If you are focusing on the disability rather than on the person, find out what you want to know about the disability so you can get beyond that. I have never minded when people ask me about my agoraphobia. But I do mind when people make decisions for me, or avoid being around me because they don't understand my needs and are reluctant to ask.

People with disabilities are just that — people, people who happen to have disabilities. The disabilities are a part of them but not the whole of them and do not define who they are. The interesting part is finding out who they really are.

Support for AIDS home

CHICAGO — The Alexian Brothers, a Catholic order with a long history of commitment to health care, are raising $700,000 to convert an old convent on the city's north side into a residence for AIDS patients. The residence will house about 30 people, doubling the beds available in the city for patients who are too ill to live alone but are not sick enough to be hospitalized.

The brothers will staff the home, while the Roman Catholic Archdiocese will provide the facilities and administrative support. Unlike similar homes opening around the country, the project has received support not only from the gay community, but also from the neighborhood residents and even conservative members of the local St. Sebastian parish council which voted to support the plan 16-2. The parish also allows regular mass in St. Sebastian by members of Dignity.

Surprising support

MASSACHUSETTS — For 14 years gays and lesbians in this state have been promoting, without success, the passage of a civil rights bill that would assure equal access to housing, employment and credit regardless of sexual orientation.

Supporters have pointed to opposition by the Roman Catholic Church as the largest obstacle to passage of the bill. In a surprise move, the bill has been endorsed by the Massachusetts House following an emotional 7-hour debate. The approval came with a 12-vote margin in the 160-member house. The bill must still pass the state senate.

Abuse

NEW YORK — A member of the Nation of Islam, a national group of black fundamentalists, threatened black lesbians and gay men at a rally held in August. Minister Kuba Abu Khuss reportedly shouted "If you're a lesbian or black gay or a homosissy, you're getting out. I'm here to clean up the community."

According to Drew Hopkins, a reporter at a New York cable TV station, the group believes homosexuality is the result of integration, which it regards as a source of evil in the black community.

Groups such as the Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays, Gay Men of African Descent, the New York Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project are encouraging black leaders to denounce Minister Khuss.
Region 1 — experts in growing local chapters

A look at a region that knows how to organize.

By Karen Abate

Region 1 is eastern seaboard all the way — proud of its number-1-ness (apparently some of them were already getting together in 1976 when they heard of the then Southern California Kinship stirrings). Region 1 includes the original thirteen-state cities of Boston, New York City and Philadelphia, as well as Pittsburgh and Reading, PA — of recent more politically modest Quest fame.

Region 1 members don’t get on freeways and travel great western distances to attend regional meetings (it’s a six-hour drive from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh); they’ve grown chapters in the three major regions, complete with their own social coordinators, monthly meetings, and newsletters. The two most active cities are Boston and New York.

There are social gatherings. Philadelphia likes picnics, trips and video viewings on gay subjects. The New York City chapter specializes in speakers and Broadway shows (goodbye, Bob Fosse, you will be missed). And Boston favors concerts. Region 1 is organized.

Region 1’s advertising and gift subscription programs are a particular source of pride to Van Johnson, immediate past regional director and formerly the national public relations director of Kinship. A large portion of his budget goes to advertising in local and large gay papers and radio stations.

Through regional newsletter-solicited donations, and with guidance from Ron Lawson, church liaison and region 1 member, the region has raised about 45 gift subscriptions’ worth of exposure for the Connection. The newsletter is regularly sent to selected deans of Adventist schools, pastors, gay newspapers, and even to a branch of the New York Public Library which has a gay collection. There are plans for information packets to be sent to students of AUC and CUC to raise consciousness before the next summer’s Kampmeeting in Maryland.

At the current time, the position of regional director is still open in Region 1, and elections are pending.

Kinship members in Philadelphia enjoy an area meeting.

Van Johnson Region 1 (215) 862-0216
Open Region 2
Tom Kapnow Region 3
Lee Stanford Region 4 (313) 335-6244
Regional meeting planned for the November 6 - 8 near Detroit. Special guest speaker will be Harriet Dart, president of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Call Lee for details.

Tera Price Region 5 (713) 622-8308
Lee Harding Region 6 (303) 322-4568
Scott Roskelley Region 7 (503) 666-2336
Cindy Belleau Region 8 (408) 866-0159
November 14 meeting at Cindy’s mom’s house in St. Helena. Call for details.

Doug Bom Region 9 (818) 500-1493
Jeremy Young Region 10 (416) 533-5896

Australia
November 8 meeting in Sydney.
Call Gwenda Green for details at 61/049/435225.

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Board meeting in January

There will be a meeting of the Kinship board from 9:00 a.m. January 23 to 4:00 p.m. January 24, 1988 at Hal and Richard’s in Rancho Cucamonga. All Kinship members are welcome to attend and contribute to board meetings. If you are flying into the Los Angeles area, land at the Ontario CA airport, since it is considerably closer than LAX. Ground transport will be provided by Kinship from the Ontario airport only. For details about the weekend, call Hal Jobe at (714) 981-1716.

Coming out awards

Congratulations to Jerry Cheney for coming out and sharing his story with us this month; and to everyone who participated in the weekend of demonstrations in Washington, D.C. Included were some people whose names have not been published before; David Wong, John Cox, Jason Butekap, Vern Frey, Steve Ramirez, Dan Garcia, Marcus Becker, Steve Dunne and Craig Scott.

To have your name listed here or to tell your story, write to the layout editor c/o this paper.

Our thanks

We have appreciated all the complimentary phone calls concerning the new Connection. Your warmth energizes us in our task. We are glad the Connection is so important to you. [You might want to renew your subscription now, while you are thinking of it.]

Passing...

Steve Shephard, age 37, died of lymphoma at 10 p.m. Saturday, October 17, 1987 at Santa Monica Medical Center where he had been hospitalized for 11 days for AIDS-related illness. He had been sick for three to four months. He is survived by his Kinship family and those that attended him as he died: his two closest friends — Dennis Deming, and Larry Will, as well as Richard Russell and two friends from Steve’s apartment complex and his mother.

Steve lived in Los Angeles where he owned and operated a successful interior design business.

AIDS fund

As the holiday season approaches, you may wish to remember a loved one or express thanksgiving for personal blessings through a gift to the Kinship AIDS Fund. Funds go to provide financial support to Kinship members who have contracted AIDS. Contributions should be sent to:

Kinship International
P.O. Box 3840
Los Angeles CA 90078

Please indicate that you wish your donation to go to the AIDS fund.

Remembering...

Dan Brown, age 40, of Shreveport, LA — whom many will remember from Kampmeetings or his excellent publication Bayou Buzz — died in a Eisenhower Medical Center in Rancho Mirage. Thursday morning, October 15, 1987 from AIDS-related causes.

Dan had been ill for about a year, and hospitalized for two months. He is survived by his life partner Marc Duranceau; his mother, Mary Elizabeth Brown; his brothers and sister, Joel, Tim and Lori; and his Kinship family. He left this poem:

The gift of love is forever
The memories of warm touches,
The sparkling smiles and
shared times
are the legacies that will last forever.

A memorial service is being held in Arkansas and one planned by Marc, to which Kinship members and friends are especially invited — November 21 at 2 p.m. at Ben Pickell’s home in Palm Desert, 72-814 Tampico Drive. His partner requests that memorials be given to Kinship’s AIDS fund.