

WE THE PEOPLE

Serving Lesbians, Gay Men, and Their Friends in the Redwood Empire

June 1988 Vol. 1 No. 2

FREE!

Jackson Rouses Sonoma Crowd

By Lois Pearlman

There was a clear blue sky, lush green grass and warm golden sunshine on the afternoon that Jesse Jackson came to the Sonoma County Fairgrounds. And the crowd was a veritable rainbow, too - Black Americans, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, Gray Panthers, teenagers, anti-nukers, environmentalists, striking workers from Sebastiani Vineyards holding aloft their picket signs, little kids running on the lawn and lesbians and gay men with a huge rainbow banner proudly proclaiming their presence.

This heterogeneous mixture of humanity came together on Friday, May 13, to hear Jackson talk about the reality which is a part of all their daily lives, and they were not disappointed.

Jackson spoke about our nation's priorities that put big business at the top of the heap and keep the rest of us scrambling to provide for our basic needs. He told us our federal government is spending billions of dollars to make Third World nations safe for American investors while working people in this country can barely afford to support their families. And he talked about the need for all people for economic security, civil liberties, health care, education, and a clean environment.

For the first time, when a national leader said "all people," lesbians and gays knew they were included too. They knew Jackson had come to the March on Washington and the March on Sacramento to proclaim his unhesitating support for the civil rights of lesbian and gay men and for a comprehensive and unprejudiced approach to the AIDS crisis.

Earlier the crowd heard Georgia Prescott of the Lesbian Voters Action Caucus describe how Jackson and the Black Civil Rights Movement had influenced the Gay Liberation Movement. "When he was going to high schools in Chicago and Montgomery and Los Angeles to tell students to rid themselves of self-hate we were listening... and when these kids said 'I am somebody,' we were listening then, too."

Although several speakers were scheduled to address the rally, only Prescott had an opportunity to speak before Jackson's unexpectedly early arrival. But this was not just a matter of fate. After the rally, Mary Moore, organizer of the event, said the speakers list included two women activists and two male politicians. Knowing that Jackson might arrive at any time, she scheduled the women activists first: affirmative action at work!

So why does Jackson, a Baptist minister and a product of the same sexist, racist, homophobic society as millions of other Americans, understand and boldly support the rights of lesbians and gay men? Pamela David, national co-chair of Jackson's advisory panel on lesbian and gay concerns, said Jackson came to recognize lesbians and gays as his sisters and brothers when a close family friend was diagnosed with AIDS and subsequently "came out." The Jacksons embraced their friend in his final days.

At the end of that beautiful afternoon in Santa Rosa, Jackson exhorted his assembled rainbow constituency to continue their struggle for a better life. Echoing the words of the Gay Liberation Movement, he exclaimed, "We've come too far. We can't turn around now. We've got to go forward."



Presidential Candidate Jesse Jackson greets a cheering crowd at the Santa Rosa Fairgrounds on a campaign sweep through the Redwood Empire. (Inset) Georgia Prescott of the Lesbian Voters Action Caucus addresses the rainbow throng before Jackson's arrival. CHERYL TRAENDLY/PHOTOGENICS

Urgent: California Legislators May Cripple AIDS Policies

In an unusually dire assessment of legislation pending in Sacramento, Iol Rand Martin of LIFE (Lobby for Individual Freedom and Equality) has pushed the button to alert activists that "the pro-AIDS agenda in the State Capitol is pummeled from many sides and is on the verge of defeat." Martin, the only paid lobbyist in Sacramento representing gay concerns on AIDS issues, is urging activists, now: "we may be down for the count!"

Martin's sense of urgency is hard to dispute. Legislation is passing through various Senate or Assembly committees at a fast pace, with very little challenge coming from the grass roots—bills that could cripple California's AIDS program. It appears that the serious challenge to the speakership of Willie Brown and the gay and lesbian community's over-dependence on Brown's "bag of tricks," as Martin calls them, may be the primary reasons the situation is suddenly so critical. Legislation that previously had been stalled in committee by maneuvers of Speaker Brown is likely to make it to the floor for a vote, and those votes are currently

stacked against gay men and lesbians. The "Gang of Five," a group of dissident Democratic assemblymen openly challenging the Speaker, have found in AIDS legislation a means of outmaneuvering Brown. They have joined with Republicans to forge a majority in support of bills on mandatory testing, reporting of test results, and permitting testing and disclosure of results without written or informed consent. As one examines who is putting out these dangerous bills, it becomes clear that Democratic legislators as a whole have not helped the situation, having authored many of the more offensive bills. Publicly, however, LIFE is not expressing serious concern with this turn of politics in the California Democratic Party.

Equally disturbing may be the votes that are not materializing for progressive AIDS legislation. Martin points to AB 87, the omnibus bill authored by Art Agnos before he became San Francisco mayor, as an example. Agnos handed over AB 87 to Brown to win passage in the Assembly after a thumbs-up vote from the Senate. After two months and repeated attempts to get the necessary ayes, the bill may never make it out of the Assembly. The reason according to Martin: "The Speaker has control over only 38 votes, and several of those are 'soft' on controversial AIDS bills."

Another reason for such dire talk from the lobbyist comes from the sheer numbers of bills that need close monitoring. As of February 19, the deadline for introducing new bills, this reporter counted 156 prospective changes or additions to existing legislation which are concerned with the epidemic. This is exactly twice the number of bills introduced last year. LIFE considers 41 of the bills to be either dangerous or in need of careful monitoring. Among them:

AB2900, being carried by Democrat Pat Johnston, would remove existing prohibitions in the law on the use of HIV antibody

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Lesbian and Gay Proclamation Brought to County Supervisors

A resolution for Lesbian/Gay Pride Week has been co-sponsored by the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Sonoma County AIDS Commission. Ernie Carpenter, Supervisor of District Five, is planning to propose the resolution as an agenda item on Wednesday, June 8. The resolution proclaims the last week of June 1988 as Lesbian/Gay Pride Week.

Last year a resolution was presented to the Board of Supervisors, who declined to make it an agenda item. This year the CSW agreed to place it on the agenda and assist in gaining the Board's support. However, the agenda committee may still decline to put it before the Board. Thus public/constituent support for the resolution is needed.

The Board of Supervisors regularly acknowledges individuals and groups at their meetings with proclamations. In Sonoma County, lesbians and gay men have been at the forefront of a national health crisis, the AIDS epidemic. At the same time, lesbians and gay men have contributed to the social and economic life of the county. They have lived and worked as concerned citizens and an integral part of the community. It is now time to acknowledge people who are dedicated to the well-being of Sonoma County, a

people who are PROUD, STRONG, and UNITED.

Please write or call your supervisor stating your support and concerns. Urge the passage of this resolution. For more information you can call Magi Fedorka, 792-1393. All supervisors can be reached at 527-2241.

Annual Pride Picnic Set for June 25

The Lesbian/Gay Community of Sonoma County will gather for the Second Annual Pride Picnic from noon to sunset on June 25 at Spring Lake Park in Santa Rosa. Family and friends will enjoy a day picnicking, playing volleyball, watching local bodybuilders, and enjoying scenes from "Dip Me In Honey," a lesbian comedy/musical.

The Lesbian/Gay Pride Picnic originated in 1987 with Forward Together members Magi Fedorka and Leslie Scanagatta. Bringing together our community and showing pride, strength, and unity was the purpose of the picnic. Rainbow flags waved, streamers flew, and our community banner was displayed. The event was active with people sharing their music, crafts, talents, networking, playing, laughing, and generally having a good time. Over 300 people came out in the sun last year.

Everyone is welcome to join us in the 1988 Lesbian/Gay Pride celebration at the Jackrabbit picnic area in Spring Lake Park, Santa Rosa. For more information call 792-1393 or 546-3103.

Adam's Apple

By Adam Richmond



Life in the Redwood Empire

June is a special month for us Lesbians and Gays for a couple of reasons. We get to vote against the LaRouche AIDS initiative on June 7, and then we celebrate our freedom on the 25th and 26th. With all this activity, along with events such as the March on Sacramento, there is a heightened sense of ourselves, our community, and oppression. Joyously, I'd like to reflect here on our community's progress in Sonoma County. The achievements we've created for ourselves are considerable and many have been quite successful. Our community is in the midst of transformation—a new consciousness of ourselves is occurring. There has been a flurry of activity. We are emerging from being a very unorganized but aware community to a more mobilized one on a host of issues and concepts. There are now more institutions and ideas for members of our community to identify with.

We Are Sonoma County's Sleeping Giant
Along with the Hispanic Community, Gays and Lesbians constitute the biggest minorities in the county. As we seek solutions for coping with AIDS and civil rights concerns as well as other issues, we find our aspirations are commonly not addressed or considered. We enjoy greater freedom here than in the Midwest for instance, but we are not yet fully recognized by ourselves or the powers that be.

New Groups
This is a list of groups which have emerged in recent years: Sonoma County Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club, Sonoma Community Against Violence, Reunion Now, Clicking Stones Bookstore, Stepping Stones Collective, Veterans CARE, Forward Together, Face to Face, Metropolitan Community Church, Lesbian Voters Action Caucus, Lesbian and Gay Pride Picnic, We The People, In Celebration of Life, Black Gay Men's Support Group, Gay Fathers, Lesbian and Gay Foster Parents, AIDS Awareness Group of Santa Rosa.

Does it end? NO!
There are numerous others. Nor can we forget that we have an incredible business community here, starting with the fabulous River resorts, and the Santa Rosa Inn, and now we have a directory chock full of them. Compiler Steve Clark has produced the amazing Forward Together Resources Directory. The Directory is the first one since the LGRN did one way back in 1982. This one is easy to use and has tons of listings.

Crossroads
Our community is literally at its crossroads. We are taking baby steps, it seems, toward becoming a fully realized community, forging our own way. We will never be a San Francisco, and that is not what we need up here. We must be conscious of the process and act where we can. We must have both unity and diversity. We must hold our ground against the Briggs, Doolittles, LaRouches, and Dannemeyers, but mostly we must never lose sight of our hope, our beauty, and our truth. As we become more cohesive and identifiable, the more likely it is we will threaten the status quo. We must always be ready to be patient with bigots, because we have a bit of the truth. Social change sometimes comes quickly, sometimes slowly; it will always materialize when we work for it.

We the People is published by the Northern California Gay Media Project, a collective of lesbians and gay men, and is being produced to serve the lesbian and gay community of Sonoma County and the Redwood Empire by providing a forum for information, communication, community building, public consciousness raising, networking, access to resources, the exploration of lesbian and gay cultural history and for the reporting of the news in a forthright manner.

We the People welcomes contributions of news articles and features and seeks the participation of lesbians and gay men interested in its publication. Articles should be limited to 500 words, with suggested editing for length if needed. The next copy deadline is June 13th. Include your name, address and telephone number. Contributions may be sent to: We the People, P.O. Box 1301, Forestville, CA 95436. Telephone (707) 887-2422.

This issue was put together by: Matt Cazy, Cliff Ceverly, Fran Crawford, Julia Ellison, Sandy Lowe, Kris Mazan, Jaye Miller, Melvin Muller, Jerry Noonan, Lois Paschman, Patrick Satterthwaite, Bill Shelby, Ditty Shippman, Cass Smith, Jay Smith, Nick Valenzuela and Janet Zagoria.

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Editorial

Good News/ Bad News

The good news is that the U. S. Senate has passed a \$1.8 billion AIDS Information and Research bill to fund programs over the next three years. The legislation was sponsored by Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and was a deliberate attempt to correct the criminal inaction of the Reagan administration.

The bad news is that Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) once again succeeded in attaching a homophobic "killer" amendment that would withhold federal funds from any programs that "promote or condone" homosexuality. This same measure was first passed by the Senate last year and has already begun to strangle the efforts of gay communities to disseminate safe sex information and cultivate new, nurturing, safe-sex-positive behavior: the only proven and humane deterrent to the disease. Clearly the purpose of the Helms amendment is to kill gay men.

The good news is that Senators Kennedy and Hatch succeeded in attaching a second amendment which neutralizes the first one and which, according to Senator Alan Cranston (D-Cal.), makes it clear "that federal funds may be used to design educational materials expressly for gay and bisexual men."

Cranston is one of many legislators who originally voted for the "killer" amendment when it was first introduced last October. He has since heard the outcry of the gay community and come to his senses. He now recognizes the "....devastating, potentially fatal consequences" of the restriction.

The "Killer" Conspiracy

Senator Helms, Rep. Bill Dannemeyer (R-Cal.) and their "killer" conspiracy promise to keep this issue hot with wild homophobic distortions. They have demonstrated how successful they can be when all they have to do is "whip it out" in Congress and all their dainty colleagues faint away or fall in line behind them.

Few of their colleagues in the Senate or House will challenge their criminal lies. Why is it so difficult for them to comprehend that lesbians and gay men are, first of all, human beings with full and uncompromised claims to self determination and human dignity, and secondly, that we are U.S. citizens with full claim to the constitutional rights of life, liberty and property?

Even liberals justify discrimination against lesbians and gay men on the false and indefensible grounds that we are somehow inferior to heterosexuals. Many will join cou-

rageously in the war against AIDS and come to our defense as a "risk group." But few find the common humanity, moral decency or political courage to embrace us as the proud human beings and citizens that we are.

Enter Dannemeyer

It is likely that we will witness another round of mean-spirited bigotry in Congress when the House of Representatives takes action on the Federal AIDS bill sometime this summer and when Dannemeyer will doubtless lead the charge again to attach a "killer" amendment to the measure. We hope that the corrective debate in the Senate will persuade the House to kill the "killer."

Whither Bosco

Last October representatives of our local community met with our own congressperson, Douglas Bosco, in Santa Rosa on the occasion of the historic National Lesbian and Gay Rights March on Washington. A few days later he returned to Washington and voted for the "killer" amendment. We hope that he has since also come to his senses. And we urge him to vote for the Federal AIDS bill without any murderous restrictions.

- Sandy Lowe



Participants in the Lesbian and Gay March on Sacramento on May 9 protest political bigotry. Lyndon LaRouche is the sponsor of Proposition 69, the AIDS quarantine initiative. Congressman William Dannemeyer (R-Cal.) leads the charge in Congress against lesbian, gay men and effective AIDS care.

Letters

One More Step Forward

Your first edition (and hopefully many more to follow) is one more step forward for the lesbian and gay community of Sonoma County.

Jack, my life partner, and I went back to Washington, D.C., last October for the greatest assembly of lesbian and gay people the world has ever witnessed. While there we visited the Smithsonian Institute. One exhibit had a very moving effect on us: "WE THE PEOPLE". One section showed the plight of "Black Americans" in this country's history, the other the internment of another group of American citizens, because they too were obviously different, the Japanese Americans.

Some day I hope that there will be a section for the lesbian and gay community in these historic halls, showing that we have fought the fight and have left a legacy of equality and freedom for our sisters and brothers who are yet to come.

Only WE THE PEOPLE can do this, each and every one of us. We should not rest until we are treated as human beings and have full American citizenship.

Congratulations on the community's greatest tool, an informative and free press. We are proud of your first issue. Robin Gail's "Reflections" tells the story for me—let's move "Forward Together".

- Chuck Schoen

Congratulations

Congratulations on your first issue. The newspaper looked great and was informative. All your effort, energy and time show in a quality publication. I appreciate having a community paper. This is a voice long needed. Keep up the good work.

- Magi Fedorka

Backs Anderson

I urge residents of Sonoma County's central Third District to vote on June 7 for Eric Anderson. Eric has already served for years as an advocate for the whole community. It is just this kind of person Sonoma County needs in government. He is running to replace retiring Supervisor Helen Rudee, for whom he worked as an assistant. He has most recently worked for Assemblyman Dan Hauser, who supported the lesbian and gay civil rights bill vetoed by Governor Deukmejian.

Eric Anderson represents the new guard of our county and has for years been active in meeting the people. He has "been there" behind the scenes. His assistance in helping set up the successful phonebank for the campaign against LaRouche's Proposition 64 was just one example. He is a committed environmentalist who knows the issues, and the solutions available. Eric is co-founder of the Citizens for Responsible Water Use. He is very familiar with issues regarding the homeless and mentally ill in our community and is a member of the board of directors of Community Support Network. Social services of all kinds, always threatened under the current Board of Supervisors, are sure to fare far better with the extra vote Eric would offer. Alone among the candidates, Eric Anderson has sought the input of the Lesbian and Gay community. He made it clear to me personally that discrimination of any kind is not part of his way of doing things.

If Eric Anderson is elected, the Gay and Lesbian community stand a chance of being heard without bigotry when we go before the Board of Supervisors. We need those open doors. Please vote on June 7.

- Adam Richmond

Needlestick Points Up AIDS Fear

By Jay Smith

Does a sheriff's deputy's accidental contact with a suspect's hypodermic needle represent a new and unprecedented danger to law enforcement, or is the public being stuck with an opportunistic political plug for a November AIDS initiative?

Local police were dismayed to learn in April that Sheriff's Deputy Bill Martin had contracted AIDS, ostensibly from a needle-stick while on the job. But they were not the only ones. While the Press Democrat was giving the account given out by Sheriff Dick Michaelson front-page coverage and editorially schmoozing over "people who risk their lives for us," others were angry over unanswered questions and the timing of the story.

Although investigation of the case by officials of the Centers for Disease Control could turn up new evidence, it seems unlikely the source of Martin's AIDS infection can be conclusively determined. The fact that a public relations campaign was begun by the Sheriff's Department before Martin's condition was disclosed to County health officials—as required by law—raises the suspicion that something is not quite right with his story.

Martin, who has suffered strokes from brain lesions brought on by the disease, has said the needle-stick occurred in 1981 during a routine search. Not long after, he says, he developed hepatitis B. Again the needle-stick was given as the source. But hepatitis B, like AIDS, is transmitted in a number of ways, including sexually, that are hard to rule out without all the circumstances being known.

The risk of contracting AIDS from a needle-stick is small, probably much smaller than the risk of hepatitis, because the AIDS virus is so fragile. Few such cases have been documented, even among health care workers doing blood work.

S.C. AIDS Network Facing the Crunch

By Sandy Lowe

Face to Face, the Sonoma County AIDS Network, is facing a crunch of money and volunteers, according to Mert Preston, president of the board of Sonoma County's only independent AIDS service agency. When Preston first joined the board 18 months ago the agency was tending the needs of 22 people with AIDS and the agency had an annual budget of \$30,000. Today the client load of Face to Face has climbed to 114 people and the budget has soared to \$225,000. Preston expects that both of these figures will explode in the months and years to come.

Over 200 people with AIDS have been served by Face to Face since its inception in 1984.

While the stated mission of Face to Face is "to provide emotional, informational and practical assistance" to people with AIDS (PWAs) and people with AIDS Related Condition (PWARCs) in Sonoma County, its range of service reaches far beyond. Face to Face has helped to form networks of support groups for people who have tested positive for the HIV antibody, for people researching alternative health care, for the legions of the "worried well," and for the lovers, friends and families of all the above. However, the meager amount of public funding is calculated solely on the basis of its service to PWAs. Thus the agency continues to raise most of its funding needs on its own.

According to Preston: "Public funds are lean and late in coming and, as a result, the agency is constantly scrounging for money. To date the only public money [received by Face to Face] was a one-time-only \$20,000 grant from Sonoma County in 1987."

This year the state of California cut back a \$200,000 grant application to \$115,000. Most of it goes to research further service needs. Less than \$30,000 is available for direct service to PWAs, and this is to be divided between three service

Steve Parker, coordinator of the AIDS Education and Prevention Project, puts the odds of this unusual mode of transmission at between 1 in 1,000 and 7 in 10,000. Even if the needle-stick is the cause, there is no way now to prove it. Meanwhile other more usual causes, sexual transmission or receiving contaminated blood products, have not been mentioned by Martin or his attorney, although Martin's wife is reported seropositive—the inference being that the disease was therefore transmitted from husband to wife. But until an investigation by health officials is completed no cause can be ruled out.

Because AIDS treatment is so expensive, one political activist suggests, Martin has done the sensible thing to try to establish his illness as a compensable, work-related condition. The activist, who prefers not to be named, says, "He should get all the assistance he deserves—and so should everyone who gets AIDS." However there are implications which go beyond the issue of health care rights.

The timing of the press announcement has been interpreted by many to be part of an effort by Sheriff Michaelson to push the Block Initiative. Los Angeles County Sheriff Sherman Block's November ballot initiative would allow certain emergency personnel and peace officers to require anyone they come in close contact with to be tested for HIV. Local gay leaders worry that this measure—one of several to breach current stringent laws protecting the confidentiality of HIV testing—would in effect substitute police and emergency workers' off-the-cuff judgment for that of the courts in critical cases. The consequences could be to jeopardize the health and safety of crime or accident victims, especially if they are perceived to be gay. Discretionary treatment of this kind is likely to lead to blatant and arbitrary discrimination, and the public disclosure of test results would have repercussions in health insurance restrictions, even for those like Martin who are perceived to be straight.

agencies. In any case, no allocations have been received yet.

From its beginnings Face to Face has received most of its funding and volunteer programming support from Sonoma County's lesbian and gay community. Preston describes the community's response as "inventive, generous and incredible." But he watches people fall away under the wearying burdens of volunteer service and wonders "how long the energies of the gay community can meet the exploding demands of the AIDS epidemic."

The scandalously slow response of the government to the AIDS crisis and the virtual absence of direct public assistance to people suffering with AIDS will continue to leave private volunteer agencies such as Face to Face and Sonoma County Hospice to bear the burden of providing care, nurturance and support to PWAs, PWARCs and their relations.

Volunteer agencies like Face to Face serve as a model for compassionate, decentralized and local care services which the gay community has pioneered in many communities across the country—with virtually no help from the government. It is likely that increased local volunteer assistance will be needed for quite some time to come.

An escalating case load this year has required increased staff to train and direct the volunteers, minister to client needs, coordinate resources and services from outside the agency and of course the continuing search for money to do all the work. Face to Face is in constant need of volunteers on all levels.

Preston, the current Board president and a resident of Sonoma County for 29 years, appreciates the deliberate effort that is required to build a compassionate community and deliver quality care to those in need. He invites others to join the volunteer effort and reminds us that "service doesn't just happen."

The Board of Directors is itself a group of hard working volunteers. Preston has raised a family, is now a retired business man and has been a community activist for many years with such

Mert Preston, Board President
PHOTO BY SANDY LOWE

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REFLECTIONS

By Robin Gail

Looking Ahead

Comedian Robin Tyler was at The Woods during Women's Weekend. Sometimes funny, sometimes not, she was like a lesbian Henny Youngman. (Take my lover. Please.) A little mean-spirited.

But she also joked about being "politically correct" or "politically incorrect," which started me musing on the PC/PI concept as it might or might not apply in 1988.

As I said last month, ten years ago we were hard on ourselves—politically and socially. We were extremely critical, demanding rigid political conformity. Our political beliefs flowed into our personal lives, till it was socially acceptable to criticize each other's personal behavior from a political perspective.

We were passionate on issues from global imperialism to non-organic flea sprays, from racism and classism to whether or not it was morally right to serve sugar-sweetened desserts at concerts. We dumped it all into our hopper, giving everything equal importance. Our motives were pure—as we walked the mine fields of American life, based as it is on oppression, dishonesty and greed. We could see what was wrong, and we naively believed if we simply pointed out how people were "wrong," they would thank us and change, and society's ills would be cured.

What we really did was trash each other and hurt each other's feelings, creating an internal backlash of conservatism. The things wrong with the world today are so terrible and subtle that it is mind-boggling to battle them all, so some retreated into disinterest. It became popular to be proud of being "politically incorrect." Politics got a bad name—something you wouldn't want to step in as you entered the Yuppie 80's.

Some of us needed a break from activism, and many began an interior journey that kept us focused on our own personal growth rather than on the growth—or the decline—of society in general. For some, politics was discouraging and unpleasant. After all, how many people you vote for ever get elected? And for some it was easier to work toward buying a new car and other material evidences of success than to work toward changing society. The payoff is more immediate. Some, thankfully, never wavered in their dedication and their work.

Now it's 1988, and a decade of life in the fast lane is ending. The wheel has turned again, and people are waking up. This newspaper would not have happened five years ago, or even two. Most non-mainstream publications have focused on personal growth and New Age consciousness during the past few years, necessarily so. But I believe people need to be able to take their consciousness and spirituality and use it in their daily lives.

When we see the state of the country and the world today, it becomes apparent it is again time to "get political." To resist those people, institutions and governments which are abusive. It is as important to stop government-sanctioned terrorism as to stop child abuse; as necessary to resist rape of the environment as to fight violence against women or the oppression of gays.

It's time to stop being contentedly "politically incorrect" and to understand that even the smallest step is of importance on the longer journey.

We can learn from our mistakes of ten years ago. We can be kinder to ourselves, and more supportive, so we can achieve greater unity working toward common goals. It is urgent for us to be willing and unafraid to take on the label "political activist" and get to work. On all fronts. This means letter-writing, demonstrating, talking to people, educating. And voting. Whatever needs doing.

As the Caterpillar said, "Begin at the beginning and stop when you come to the end." We are not at the end yet, and none of us can afford to stop, but the beginning is wherever you are today.

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Legislation...

(continued from page 1)

tests to determine eligibility for both life and health insurance. Martin believes that at least some of the hard-won protection against testing will be lost this year, maybe all of it.

AB 2153, which passed the Assembly 51 to 0 and is now in Senate committee, will permit testing mental hospital patients without their consent. This bill will almost certainly be approved by the Senate, unless strong opposition appears soon.

AB 2319, written by Democrat Bruce Bronzan or perhaps Willie Brown, depending on whom you believe, will mandate testing of convicted prostitutes and will coast to certain passage in the Senate, according to Martin.

SB-2643. In an effort to defuse L.A. Sheriff Sherman Block's November ballot initiative on testing, Attorney General John Van de Kamp, again a Democrat, is sponsoring a bill that would permit testing of people charged, not convicted, of a crime if the alleged victim can show probable cause that blood or semen may have been transferred during the alleged criminal act. This bill was authored by Democratic State Senator Gary Hart, chair of the Select Committee on AIDS.

AB 3673 is particularly alarming to activists who engage in civil disobedience and other direct action that could lead to arrest. This bill would permit testing without consent

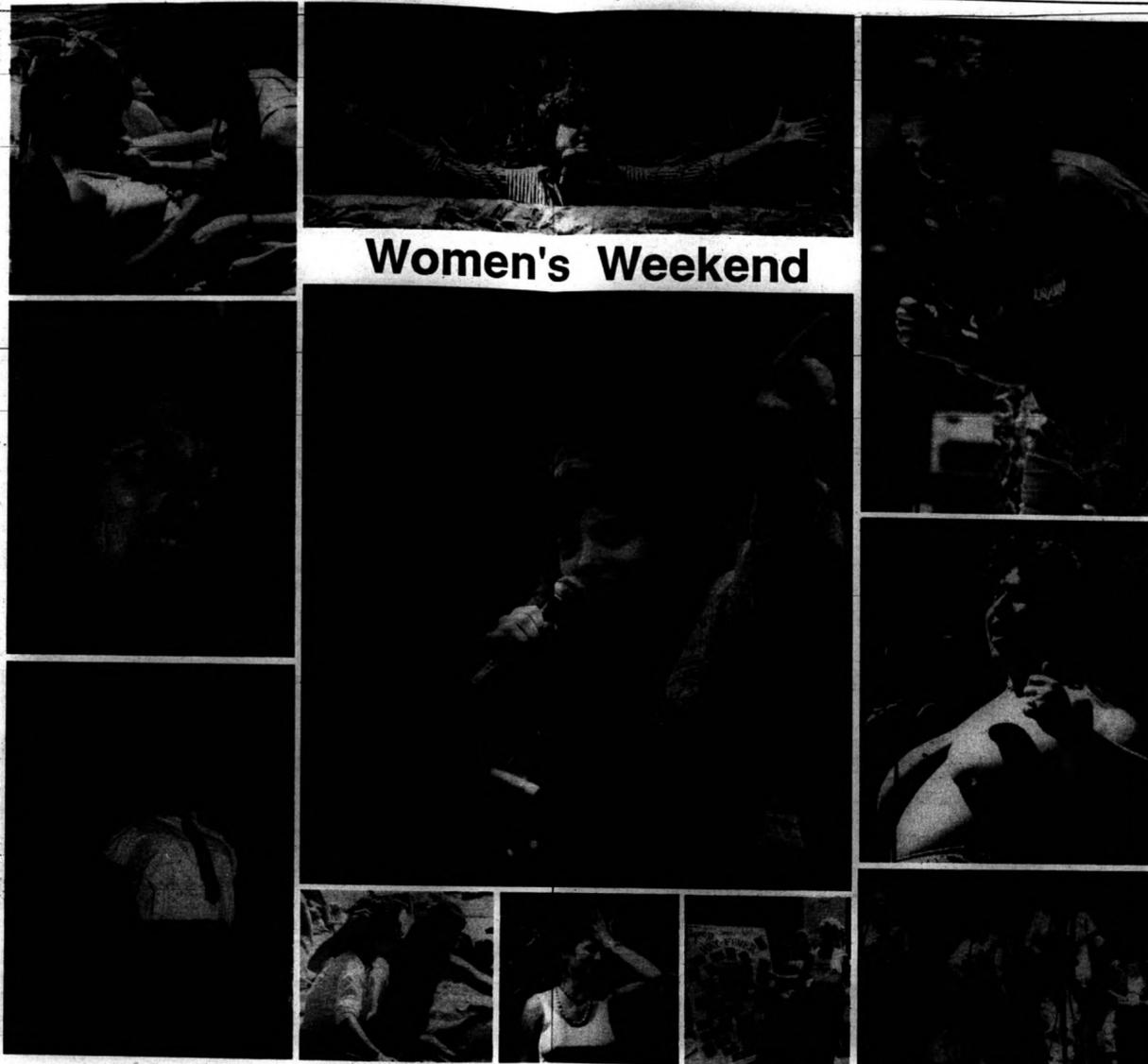
of any arrested person if a public safety officer believes s/he may have been exposed to a disease such as AIDS. The bill was authored by Democrat Steve Clute.

AB 4506 is identified by LIFE as "the most frightening of bills," as it would make HIV a communicable disease, thereby requiring medical workers to report the names of HIV-infected people to public health officials. This bill is similar to LaRouche's Proposition 69.

AB 3505. A toss-up for worst bill could easily go to this one, which permits a county health officer to close any business which permits or encourages sexual activity if the officer believes that a virus such as AIDS may be spread as a result of the business. The broadness of the bill could jeopardize any place where gay men and lesbians congregate.

Of the 156 AIDS policy bills before the State Assembly and Senate, the majority are progressive. But many may be defeated due to excessive attention given to the few negative bills. Martin reports that many politicians in Sacramento are complaining that the gay community and AIDS activists are "ominously quiet," making it especially difficult to promote a progressive AIDS agenda. He notes that the same is not true of our opponents, who are supported by the Religious Right. As Martin says, "If the status quo remains, the most catastrophic of predictions will become reality."

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Women's Weekend

Opening up early for Guerneville's 1988 summer season, Women's Weekend on April 29-30 and May 1 proved to be one of the most successful for the event to date. Headliner Teresa Trull (center) ended an entertainment-packed show to a weekend crowd of over 2000. The Woods was the stage for most of the weekend's entertainment. Pictured above are (clockwise from upper right): internationally known comedienne Robin Tyler; gospel/blues singer Lisa Cohen; local group Greenfire; Zan Meyer of Tigress, a Sonoma County film company; Carmen McKay of Forestville, the producer of this year's event; a hot kiss for a hot day; a striptease show courtesy Blush Production and Burlesk; comedienne Linda Moake at Clicking Stones Bookstore; reflective moment for a couple; and Linda Gerard, cabaret singer and accompanist to Robin Tyler. Another women's weekend is scheduled for Sept. 23-25 in Guerneville at Fife's and The Woods.

Legislation...

(continued from page 4)

Suggestions from LIFE lobbyist Rand Martin for action:

1. Share this news with as many people as you can. Our success depends on galvanizing a broad network of concerned constituents.
2. Visit your legislators or their staff in their district offices.
3. Send letters to your legislators at the Sacramento office, in addition to contacts with the district offices.

4. If you have specific knowledge about AIDS, let your legislators know. Give them your personal experiences and knowledge so they can make an informed decision.

5. Activate any network you might have in order to reach the greatest number of people. Flooding the Capitol with letters and telephone calls is the number one goal.

—Keith Griffith, *The AIDS Action Call*

Local legislators are:

Assembly
Dan Hauser, 2nd district
5th & D St.
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
576-2526

Bev Hansen, 8th district
50 Santa Rosa Ave.
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
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Recovery

By Diane Wickman

Growing Up for the First Time

I began drinking when I was 14 years old and stopped growing emotionally. For the next 21 years everything I learned, felt or saw was filtered through a haze of booze, pot, cocaine or pills.

At first I thought chemicals enhanced my experiences. Now I realize my life experiences were being severely limited (as well as dulled). My disease of alcoholism/addiction was depriving me of such basic feelings as joy, sadness, anger, and laughter.

Many people don't believe I'm really 38 years old. I look younger. I suppose it's because I don't have any laugh lines, or frown lines either. When I was happy, I drank. When I was depressed I took anti-depressants, valiums, opiates, and cocaine.

People were always telling me how strong they thought I was, how I could handle anything. Nothing ever seemed to faze me. I was an actress on a stage, a tragedy, alone.

Along with many others, lesbians and gay men continue to grow in various programs of recovery from many forms of isolation, addiction, abusive behavior and family dysfunction. WE THE PEOPLE dedicates this column to

Each year during the anniversaries of my mother's death, my father's death, the birth of a daughter I've never seen, I simply increased my chemical consumption for a week or more, and wrote maudlin poetry. I survived.

Only recently in my new-found sobriety, have I begun to discover a life with feeling.

Learning how to feel is an adventure. The first thing I felt was fear. I was scared to death being clean and sober. I thought I'd find out I was crazy after all. I was bombarded with emotions. Fragments of memories confused me for months. I learned how to cry and discovered that it is actually possible to make oneself physically ill from laughing too much.

I'm shy and awkward, but I really like who I am becoming. When I'm experiencing an emotional high or low, I occasionally indulge myself by pouting a little longer than necessary or giggling all the way through a serious meeting.

This month I will celebrate three years of sobriety. This miracle is a direct result of attending 12-step meetings, complete abstinence from drugs, acceptance of a higher power, and the love and support of the recovering community.

There is so much now to do and see. I'm in awe of how full my life is today.

Gambill Runs for Congress

By Lois Pearlman

Occidental environmentalist Lionel Gambill is the progressive candidate in the First District Democratic primary for the House of Representatives, a seat held by Douglas Bosco. He is a gentle, thoughtful man with soft blue eyes, who sums up his political philosophy in these words: "Hostility towards the feminine, the child-like, the natural, and the erotic, is the basic problem in our country's thinking."

He has come to this conclusion after thirty years of political activism. In the fifties and sixties he campaigned for Adlai Stevenson and George McGovern. In

1966 he worked on the California Fair Housing Initiative, and in 1980 he participated in the Nuclear Freeze campaign. For the past eight years he has fought against offshore oil drilling as president of Friends of the Coast. Over the years he has observed the changes in our American way of life. "There needs to be a recognition by politicians that we are not living in the 1950's. Environmental issues have changed. Family structure has changed."

Lionel is supported by an expanding constituency of Democrats and other progressives who are dissatisfied with Douglas Bosco's record on everything from gay rights to intervention in Central America.

When I asked Lionel how he views his prospective job he replied, "I think a representative's business is to hear constituents' concerns and to carry their concerns to Washington and fight for them." So if you think your congressperson hasn't been hearing your concerns lately, maybe it's time for a change.

LVAC ENDORSEMENTS	Assembly:	State cont'd.
Lesbian Voters Action Caucus (LVAC) endorses the following candidates & ballot measures:	2nd District Dan Hauser	Proposition 71 YES
	8th District Bruce Ketrone	Proposition 72 NO
		Proposition 73 NO
		Proposition 74 NO
		Proposition 75 YES
		Proposition 76 YES
		Proposition 77 YES
President: Jesse Jackson	City Council: Cotati Linda Shorey (Did not want Lesbian endorsement)	Local: Measure A NO Measure B YES Measure C NO
Supervisors: District I No Endorsement District III Eric Anderson District V Ernie Carpenter	Unable to contact for questioning: Bill Miller Katherine Roberts Mary De Martini Nicholas Stewart (Sebastopol)	Members of the Lesbian Voter Action Caucus are: Caren Callahan Martha Courot Karen Fitzpatrick Sylvia Gallego Rhoda Lynda Nancy Moorhead Georgia Prescott Joanna Rebelgale
Congress: District I Eric Fried or Lionell Gambill	State: Proposition 66 YES Proposition 67 NO Proposition 68 YES Proposition 69 NO Proposition 70 YES	

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AIDS News

By Charley Kidwell

Dextran sulfate, a drug used for 20 years in Japan and available there without a prescription, has become an important AIDS treatment possibility. While it is still too early to be sure whether the drug will be useful, preliminary experience is good.

While there are at least 15 pharmaceutical companies supplying dextran sulfate in Japan, and at least one company in Canada (whose product was found to be "impure"), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has clamped a lid on availability of this drug to Americans in Japan as well as in America.

People with AIDS (PWAs) who initially reported good results and improved blood work are now reporting regression of illness without the drug. Many people have expressed the feeling of being held hostage by the FDA. Dextran sulfate is safe enough to be available without a prescription in Japan, where it is used for arteriosclerosis. Because of its 20-year history of human use, much safety information is known.

Persons with AIDS or ARC have been using doses two to three times larger than commonly used in Japan; however, these larger doses have been tested in humans without problems. Persons with AIDS or ARC can show unexpected

toxicities to drugs; but so far over fifty people have used dextran sulfate under the close observation of private practice physicians, apparently without any serious problems. The limited, anecdotal information we have on the use of dextran sulfate for AIDS or ARC looks very good at this time. The drug is taken by mouth, and is not expensive (when it has been available).

The case against dextran sulfate is: a) The fact that something works in the laboratory does not mean it works in humans; b) No formal clinical trial (conducted by the Centers for Disease Control) has yet been done to prove whether or not dextran sulfate works; c) We only have anecdotal information on a few people who have used the drug long enough to see results. The benefits found may be coincidence; and even if they are real they may not be lasting; d) Dextran sulfate is not the whole answer or the answer for everybody.

This situation clearly points up the shortcomings of American medical practices and the control that greedy pharmaceutical companies have over the FDA. There is ample information available to administer the drug safely within the patient/physician relationship, and certainly no other quick way exists to prove or disprove dextran sulfate's efficacy for people with AIDS.

In a similar example of the stranglehold the FDA has on AIDS-related medicines, CBS News Radio reports that Korea has applied for a permit to produce and sell AZT in the U.S. The Koreans will sell their product 60% cheaper than does Burroughs/Wellcome (currently the only supplier). It seems to me that Burroughs/Wellcome is taking advantage of PWAs to make gross profits!

Commission Looks Ahead

Sonoma County was one of the last counties with a large HIV positive population to appoint a county commission. Yet the 16-member group has been moving very rapidly to catch up and develop a comprehensive county plan for prevention, education, treatment, and care for the people of Sonoma County, both those with the HIV infection and the larger population which needs a basic education about the disease.

The commission has culturally sensitive representatives from business and industry in addition to the directors of Face to Face, StarCross, and other community agencies serving those with HIV infection. The purpose of the Commission on AIDS is to develop a full spectrum of services so that those services which are presently in place, like Face to Face, can have additional support in serving PWAs, PWARCs, and HIV-infected individuals.

Housing is the top priority, followed by home delivered food services for PWAs and transportation services.

If you are interested in more information about the Commission on AIDS or wish to help with a housing task force, a meals task force, or a transportation task force, or if you have ideas to share, please contact Greg Wherry, coordinator for the Commission on AIDS, at 3333 Chanate Road, Santa Rosa 95404, or call 527-4185.

Preston...

(continued from page 3)

groups as Petaluma People Services Center, M.E.N. (Men Evolving Non-violently), Dignity and LGRN. Now he brings his accumulated expertise and commitment to the service of Face to Face and the Sonoma County AIDS Foundation.

At the moment there are nine other board members, with openings for five more. The board welcomes additional members dedicated to providing services to PWAs and PWARCs and is particularly interested in people with talents in accounting, public relations, business, media, communications, counseling and fundraising.

For information about working with the Board contact Mert Preston at 579-5308 or Sharon Tomas, the Executive Director of Face to Face, at 887-1581.

Community Urged to Help PWA Emergency Fund

The PWA/PWARC Emergency Fund needs help. This is a separate fund that can be drawn upon by PWAs/PWARCs when times are tough. There are guidelines such as an \$800 limit during the year. Rent can only be paid one time from this fund, with a \$25 monthly limit for personal money. A spokesperson for the emergency fund assures us that "this is not a free-ride fund." In his words, "AIDS can mean a loss of income and cause many other difficulties. We all get tired of this disease and dealing with fundraising, but so do our friends who have the virus. We can all afford to send \$5 at least, and hopefully more, so make it a policy of yours to send some money each month."

Send contributions to Face to Face, P.O. Box 892, Guerneville, CA 95446, and specify that the money should go to the PWA/PWARC Emergency Fund.

Face to Face Holds New Advocate Training

Face to Face, the Sonoma County AIDS Network, is having their next Advocate Training in June. The training will be held the weekends of June 11th and June 18th.

Advocates are volunteers who provide emotional support and services to people with AIDS and ARC, lovers and family. The training includes a medical overview of AIDS, crisis intervention, grief and loss, substance abuse and co-dependency, spirituality, dyads, and role playing.

If you are interested in this training and in making a six-month commitment to Face to Face, please call for an application. For more information please call Jude, Volunteer Coordinator, at 887-1581.

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Calendar of Events

Saturday June 4

Forward Together general meeting. 12 noon, Howarth Park Gazebo, Santa Rosa.

Barbara Grier will talk about the history & future plans of Nalad Press. 5 p.m., ClaireLight, Santa Rosa. No admission charge. 575-8879.

ClaireLight's Second Anniversary Party. Come celebrate with us! Bring your friends. Door prizes every hour. Noon-5 p.m. No admission charge. 575-8879.

Tuesday June 7

Veterans C.A.R.E., gay and lesbian veterans and their friends, meets at 7:30 p.m. at the Petaluma Veterans Building, Petaluma. We serve a dinner for \$3.00. For information call Jack, 829-5393. Guest speaker: Joe Powers from the Veterans Service Office, speaking on veterans benefits and upgrading of discharges. Come with your list of questions.

Gay/Lesbian AA meeting. 7 p.m., Clicking Stones, Monte Rio. 865-9922.

Wednesday June 8

AIDS, ARC, and HIV-positive people's Alternative Treatment/Healing group. 7:30 p.m. at Face to Face, Guerneville. 887-2437.

Thursday June 9

Alicia Ruste & Paula Mickey present Body-Being Connection: An Evening of Foot Reflexology. Bring a towel. 7 p.m., ClaireLight. Admission: \$3-\$7, sliding scale. 575-8879.

Gay Men's Minority Support Group meets 2nd Thursday of each month, 7 p.m. For information call Donnell, 528-3011.

Alcoholic Free Society for Lesbians. 7 p.m., Clicking Stones. 865-9922.

Friday June 10

Rebecca Gordon, author of *Letters from Nicaragua*, speaks about her recent visit to Cuba. 7:30 p.m., Clicking Stones. 865-9922.

Saturday June 11

Lesbian Pleasure Party. Demo party for sex toys and safe sex discussion. Clicking Stones, 865-9922.

Fox Broadcasting will telecast a six-hour all-star musical tribute from London called "Freedomfest — Nelson Mandela's 70th Birthday Celebration." KTVU Channel 2. Check TV listings for time.

Sunday June 12

Jane Hirshfield, author of two new prize-winning books, will read & sign her latest book of poetry, *Of Gravity & Angels*. Hirshfield is also co-translator of *The Ink Dark Moon*, love poems by Ono No Komachi & Izumi Shikibu. 5 p.m., ClaireLight. No admission charge. 575-8879.

Tuesday June 14

Gay/Lesbian AA meeting. 7 p.m., Clicking Stones. 865-9922.

Love Yourself, Heal Yourself informational for gay men. 7:00-10:00 p.m. 585-2413.

Nature Spirituality Workshop with Dolfyn. Learn how to communicate directly with all nature & apply Shamanic wisdom to everyday life. 7 p.m., ClaireLight. Admission: \$3-\$7, sliding scale. 575-8879.

Wednesday June 15

We the People editorial meeting, 7 p.m. New contributors welcome. For information call 544-4109.

Thursday June 16

Alcoholic Free Society for Lesbians. 7 p.m., Clicking Stones. 865-9922.

Friday June 17

North Bay Gay Fathers group and potluck dinner. Call John or Neil at 887-9538, or Mike at 874-1505.

Tear Gas Certification presented by Worthington-Fein Associates. Learn how to safely and legally use this method for self-protection. Admission: \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door. Pre-registration suggested. Clicking Stones, 865-9922.

Gay Men's Potluck, 7:30 p.m. For information call 544-4109.

Saturday June 18

Love Yourself, Heal Yourself workshop for gay men, continued. 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. 585-2413.

Women Artists Salon: Come show your work, and converse with other artists, 7:00 p.m. Call 765-2305.

Patricia Gray, local attorney, will discuss what lawsuits can & cannot do for victims & survivors of sexual abuse & violence against women. 5 p.m., ClaireLight. No admission charge. 575-8879.

LGRN potluck. 6:30 p.m. For information call Mert, 579-5308.

Tuesday June 21

Gay/Lesbian AA meeting. 7 p.m., Clicking Stones. 865-9922.

Wednesday June 22

AIDS, ARC, and HIV positive people's Alternative Treatment/Healing group. 7:30 p.m., 2420 Delevan Way, Santa Rosa. 544-1769.

Thursday June 23

Alcoholic Free Society for Lesbians. 7:00 p.m., Clicking Stones. 865-9922.

Friday June 24

The Martin AIDS Support Network will host its 3rd Social for People with AIDS and People with ARC and their friends. 7:00-10:00 p.m., Fairfax Women's Club, 46 Park Ave, Fairfax. No admission charge. (415) 457-2437.

Saturday June 25

Lesbian over Forty Think Tank. Bring food to share and pillow. Plates, cups, coffee, tea, and herb tea provided. 6:00 p.m., Clicking Stones. 865-9922.

Lesbian/Gay Pride Picnic. Spring Lake Park, Santa Rosa, noon to sunset. Bring picnic lunch. \$2 charge per vehicle for day use (car pool advised).

Tuesday June 28

Gay/Lesbian AA meeting, 7:00 p.m., Clicking Stones. 865-9922.

Wednesday June 29

Louise Raffin, editor of *Different Daughters*, will read & sign her newest collection of stories, *Unholy Alliances: New Fiction by Women*. 7:00 p.m. No admission charge. ClaireLight, 575-8879.

Thursday June 30

Alcoholic Free Society for Lesbians. 7:00 p.m., Clicking Stones. 865-9922.

Friday July 1

North Bay Gay Fathers group and potluck dinner. Call John or Neil at 887-9538, or Mike at 874-1505.

Sunday July 3

Book Party/Celebration: Rosebush Publishing introduces its first publication, *Peace be Still, a Meditation Coloring Book*, by Petaluma artist Jennie Bush, 3:00-5:00 p.m. Come and celebrate and find out more about meditation art. Clicking Stones, 865-9922.

Other Programs:

Santa Rosa RISE program. A ten-week health education course designed for persons affected by Human Immunodeficiency Virus. Although especially suited to the needs of persons testing HIV-positive and their care partners, the course is open to anyone interested in learning practical self-stewarding techniques for strengthening the immune system. For information and starting date call Dr. Rick Flinders, 544-3340, ext. 4170.

BANGLE, Sonoma County. The Bay Area Network of Gay and Lesbian Educators (BANGLE) hopes to form a new chapter in Sonoma County this summer to join existing groups in San Francisco, the East Bay, Contra Costa, and the South Bay. BANGLE's objectives include: 1) stopping homophobic slurs and violence against lesbians and gays in the public schools and 2) the inclusion of positive information on lesbians and gay men throughout the school curricula. For information on a meeting date in early summer shortly after school is out, call Jaye at 433-9158.

Solstice at Wolf Creek. Celebrate an ecstatic erotic, epiphanic, soulful summer solstice at Wolf Creek, June 12 through 22. The solstice gathering, the first of the summer season, is also the first to be organized at Wolf Creek by a group other than Nomenus, the gay men's spiritual group that established the land sanctuary site. For a copy of the call to "A Loving Gathering of Radical Faeries," write Project Account, P.O. Box 6732, San Francisco, CA 94101. "A Midsummer Gathering" will take place July 26 to August 5. For a copy of the call, write Midsummer Gathering, P.O. Box 11655, San Francisco, CA 94101.

Affirming Gay Christians: "Not a Sin, Not a Sickness: The Bible & Homosexuality." 7:30-9:15 p.m., Wednesdays. June 1, "The Truth Shall Set You Free." June 8, "Genesis 19: Sodom Revisited." June 15, "Leviticus 18: What's an Abomination?" June 22, "Romans 1, I Corinthians 6: When in Rome." June 29, "Is the Homosexual My Neighbor?" Sponsored by Metropolitan Community Church of Santa Rosa. Seminars include video and audio tapes, pamphlets, and other instructional materials. Cost: \$5.00. Call 526-HOPE for more information.

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Help Wanted: People who can sell advertising for We the People. We need at least 5 volunteers so that work will be minimal. No experience necessary, but you must be available during regular business hours. We also need writers, reporters, photographers, graphic artists, and people with Macintosh experience or machines. Help support the Redwood Empire's own lesbian/gay newspaper. Call Jerry at 887-2422 to volunteer.

We the People reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. If an ad cannot be run, or a mistake occurs in the copy, you will be credited with another ad. Call 887-2422 for rates.



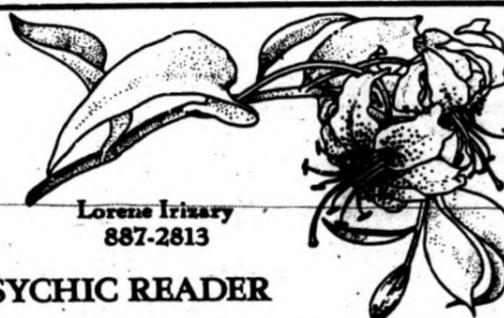
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