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Title: *PA Rural Gay Caucus Report*

Date: October 1976

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The Pennsylvania Rural Gay Caucus Newsletter
P. O. Box 182
Northumberland, Pa. 17857

The Pennsylvania Rural Gay Caucus will convene in Reading on Saturday, November 6th at 147 North 10th Street (third floor). Facing the Red Star Saloon, the entry is on the left. This will be an important meeting of the Caucus at which by-laws (enclosed) as proposed by an ad-hoc structure of the Caucus will be considered, and at which elections for officers will be conducted. Nominations for office may be made any time before the election. Nominees announced as of this writing are to be found in the Rural Caucus Minutes. As there is much business for the Caucus to consider, it is recommended that each member look carefully at the proposed by-laws and come prepared with the specifics of any additions, deletions, or changes they wish to propose.

Following the Caucus, at 6:00 o'clock, a hay-ride and weiner roast will be sponsored for the benefit of the Caucus. Many local people will be going, but thirty tickets have been reserved for the participation of caucus members. Tickets are \$2.50 per person. See Joe Burns, Rick Hoffman, or Bob Woods at the meeting for tickets. We will be leaving to go twelve miles to the site of the hay-ride at 5:30.

Members of the Gay Coordinating Society in Reading have offered overnight accommodations for 6 women and 5 men. Many more persons can be accommodated if those wishing to stay over can bring their own sleeping bags or bed rolls. Women may contact Jan Sweat for overnight accommodations; men may contact Jerry Yoder.

Rural Caucus Minutes

The October meeting was held in Cumberland Union Building, Shippensburg State College, Shippensburg. The Call to Order was delayed until 1:50 P.M. by a meeting of the Legislative Committee. Co-Chairpersons Ruth Steck and Ray Stickle opened the meeting. A letter stating the formal withdrawal of LE-HI-HO from the Caucus until further notice was read. A letter from Helmut Baerwald, LE-HI-HO member, stated his formal resignation as Treasurer of the Caucus. An agenda was culled which included the internal difficulties of the Caucus, a proposed list of changes in the Caucus Structure, Gay Lobby Day, and a consideration of a state conference.

The conflicts within the Caucus were moved to a Committee composed of the principals and removed from discussion at this and subsequent Caucus meetings.

It was proposed that the questions of structure be considered immediately by a committee of persons present who were interested in the questions. The Caucus adjourned for consideration of structure and all persons present remained present. Janet Cooper chaired the Committee meeting of the Whole on Structure.

After a number of questions had been passed by the committee, the issue was raised that since we were changing the structure, should we not also hold elections? To settle the issue, it was decided that a vote of confidence be taken on the present leadership of the Caucus. Yes would have been to continue them in office until the expiration of their current terms next June.

A vote of no confidence was recorded with five abstentions not counting.

Co-chairperson Ray Stickle made a short speech of resignation and left shortly thereafter; Co-Chairperson Ruth Steck resigned, Barry Lace, Chairperson of the Legislative Committee submitted a written resignation from his position; Sam Edmiston announced his resignation as Secretary of the Caucus effective at the end of the meeting; and two other members joined Ray and Barry Lace in their exit from the Caucus.

Stunned silence, then confusion followed these acts. Finally it was pointed out that the Vote of Confidence never required any resignations, but was rather a call for elections, until which time the officers continue in office. In England

and in other parliamentary countries, when such votes are taken, the same parties which fell in crisis are often reelected. The electoral process gives all parties a chance to indicate new directions and win the will of the majority.

Ruth withdrew her resignation and agreed to convene the next Caucus meeting in Reading.

Nominations were made immediately. Nominated for co-chairpersons were Ruth Steck, Janet Cooper, Mary Muncarrow; Sam Deetz, Ken Burke, Bill Hollabaugh, and Joe Burns; for Secretary, Sam Edmiston and Crystal Renee (Chris Poorman); and for Treasurer, Helmuth Baerwald and Drew Larson, and Jan Sweat. Nominations will remain open until the actual vote is taken.

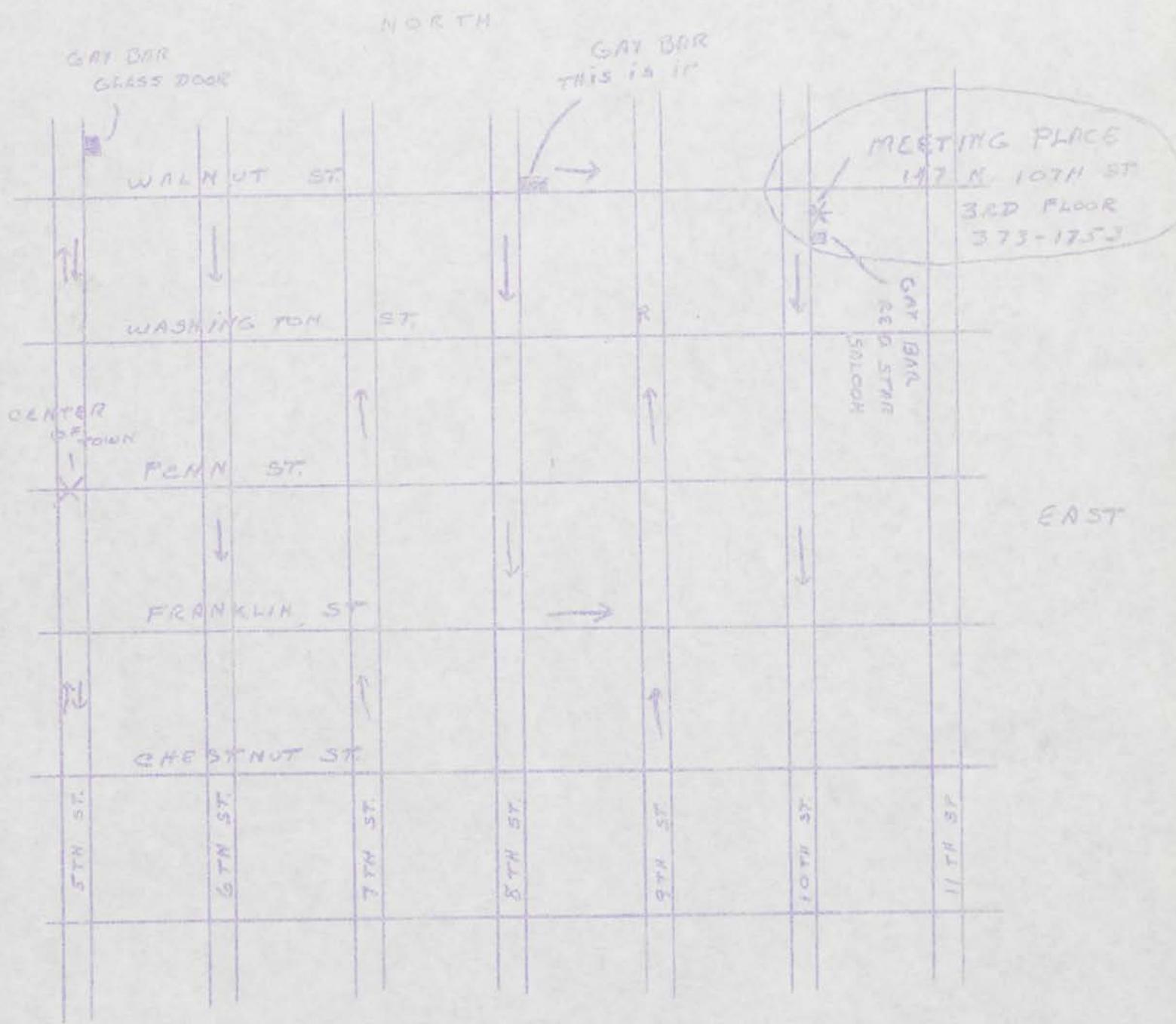
The Caucus adjourned again to consider structure. When it was seen that the whole body of resolutions would not be covered, an ad hoc Structure Committee was ordered to convene on Oct. 16 at Lancaster. (The enclosed by-laws proposed for consideration by the Caucus is the final report of that committee- editor.)

Shortly before adjournment at 5:45, the Caucus heard from Crystal Renee, the report of a 16 year old boy in Lebanon who committed suicide on the evening before his high school classes commenced for the year rather than face the ridicule and harrassment of the "fagget" by his classmates. Somewhat moved by the telling, the Caucus ordered that a strong letter be addressed to the Principal of the school on behalf of the Caucus by the Chairperson, Ruth Steck. (Her letter is enclosed) We are also willing to furnish speakers to the school on request, and to act in support of the Gay League of Lebanon which is closest to the situation.

Respectfully submitted by

Sam Edmiston, Secretary

Below is a simplified map of central Reading. Routes 222 or 422, the principal routes into Reading will bring you into some point of the grid shown. Please note: numbered streets run north-south and traffic flows north on odd numbered streets, south on even numbers as indicated by the arrows. Parking may best be found on 9th and 11th streets. If lost, phone 373-1753. We will hold the phone close to the speakers so that you may hear the proceeding, since we cannot explain how to get there.



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